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NOTES OF THE WEEK.

When Hindenburg was given the acting dictatorship over the enemy armies we ventured to remark more than once—a most unpopular thing to do—that there was no wisdom at all in guffawing in advance at anything he might be able to accomplish. We only wish that we had been completely wrong, but it has turned out that there was no wisdom but a good deal of thoughtless folly in poohpoohing Hindenburg. As a fact it is too clear that Hindenburg has achieved a good deal in the East of which it is impossible to make light to-day. The truth is Hindenburg is a powerful dominating man who knows his own mind and means to have his way. Such characters are formidable in war—and in life generally—when they are something more than obstinate dunderheads: and Hindenburg is a good deal more than that. His Roumanian strategy, carried out with skill and quickness by Falkenhayn and Mackensen, is remarkable.

It was, we fear, not an advantage that Roumania came into the war when she did. She was not fully munitioned, and though she is understood to have certainly one soldier who has genius, she has not yet been able to put him in supreme command. Taking a long and broad view of the position, perhaps the most regrettable part of the business, strictly from a military point of view, is that—obviously—the Russian offensive of 1917 may have to be very considerably deferred, which means a substantial lengthening of the war: for it is scarcely humanly possible for Russia, true and mighty-hearted in the Allied cause though she is, to succour sore-stricken Roumania now, and in a few months time to start her great offensive against Germany. People must not jump to the angry conclusion that none of these things was foreseen; they will be wrong, if they do. *They were foreseen by the military experts.* But there were also powerful arguments why Roumania should come into the war when she did, and the long and short of it is that these prevailed. The luck is running against us, and the enemy is adroit

and strong. It looks much as if the enemy would soon be organising the agriculture of the rich wheat plains of Wallachia. We do not like that move at all. It will help to relieve the food strain on Germany and Austria next summer at a critical time.

To turn from general reflections on the Roumanian position: it is clear that the enemy is bent on carrying through a hurricane campaign against Bukarest. He has laid his plans to strike there an overwhelming blow before the Russian menace can avail. We cannot expect this great rush of Falkenhayn and Mackensen to come to a mysterious dead stop as did the rush on Paris! Nor will any Verdun analogy serve. But Bukarest itself is not all that matters to Roumania or all that matters to Germany. Roumania will take a great deal of overrunning yet, with the Russians already attacking in the Carpathians north of the boundary. In a singularly noble message to the British Prime Minister, M. Trepoff, the new Russian Prime Minister, speaks of the "indissoluble friendship between our two countries, strengthened for ever by the blood shed for the same cause by our brave warriors". We watch with admiration the effort which Russia is now making for Roumania: her stroke for Italy is still fresh in the memory.

Lord Derby, in the House of Lords on Tuesday, dressed down the poison-mongers who have tried to belittle the work of the Commander-in-Chief in France. How he did it the following delightful passage from his speech nicely shows: "The members of the Army Council (and I speak of them not only as a whole but for each member individually) have complete confidence in Sir Douglas Haig, and they believe that the best way of showing that they have such confidence is to fall in, as far as they possibly can, with any and every suggestion that he may make to secure the greater efficiency of the Army under his control. The report that friction exists between the Army Council or individuals thereof and Sir Douglas Haig is untrue. We have a combination of Sir Douglas Haig, Com-

manding in the Field, and Sir William Robertson, Chief of the General Staff, which cannot be equalled, and much less improved."

It is no secret that the Army in France has been incensed by some of the mean and miserable criticisms of the great work on the Somme, and at the wringing of hands over the alleged immense casualties there. Men and officers alike have a complete confidence in the British leadership in France; and they know that these casualties have been remarkably light considering the nature of battles such as those at Thiépval, Combles, and Beaumont Hamel, where the strongest fortresses ever made have been most brilliantly stormed. They know that British arms have been far more successful on the Somme than anywhere else in the world since the war began; and that this success has been achieved through the courage of the troops plus exact skill and forethought in leadership. These are not opinions; they are ascertained facts. It may be urged that the people who have been trying to backbite the leadership in France have been acting not through malice, but through ignorance. It may be so—we cannot tell. But there is such a thing as criminal ignorance.

In the same speech Lord Derby, with the full concurrence of both the Secretary of State for War and the Commander-in-Chief, announced that Sir Eric Geddes had—at the suggestion of the former and with the full assent of the latter—taken over Sir Frederick Clayton's office of Inspector-General of the Lines of Communication. He paid "a humble tribute" to the great work of Sir Frederick, and spoke of the "almost overwhelming strain" on that office. Its burdens are "really more than one man can bear". In future the holder will be relieved of some of the pressure by a readjustment. These changes have been made with the full consent of the Commander-in-Chief.

On Wednesday afternoon Mr. Balfour outlined in the House various changes in the Admiralty. Sir John Jellicoe becomes First Sea Lord in place of Sir Henry Jackson, who takes the Presidency of the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, and Sir David Beatty assumes the command of the Grand Fleet, a position which will, we presume, involve further changes among the senior officers. These changes are popular, but are no concessions to recent alarm about the Navy, since they were settled some time since, and the announcement was only delayed for military reasons.

Sir John Jellicoe has won the entire confidence of the Grand Fleet, and will, let us hope, strengthen the public confidence in the executive at home. Sir Henry Jackson is well known for his scientific distinction, and was one of the chief promoters of wireless telegraphy on our ships. Sir David Beatty, who played the leading part in the Battle of Jutland, has a splendid and lively record as a fighting Irishman, and, now only in his forty-sixth year, has risen to his high rank with amazing speed. Under his charge the Navy is not likely to be wanting in energy. The voices which have been recently raised against Mr. Balfour hardly represent, we believe, the opinion of the chief Admiralty experts. Mr. Balfour is liked because he does not interfere in technical questions outside his capacity, because he does his best to secure what is wanted without delay, and, lastly, because he is a gentleman.

Attempts at naval raids on the English coast are clearly part of the German programme of warfare. On the night of Thursday-Friday six German destroyers attempted to approach the north end of the Downs and were seen by a patrol vessel, which, by their account, they sunk. They also claimed to have bombarded Ramsgate. These claims are not supported by the Admiralty account, which was issued after the German version on Saturday last. The enemy only fired about twelve rounds, and hurried off at once. One shell hit a drifter, which, however, returned safely to port with-

out any injury to the crew. We do not gather how near the German vessels got to the coast.

The Board of Trade on Wednesday night issued a Regulation under the Defence of the Realm Act by which all, or any, coal mines can be taken over by the Board, with the result that the management and use of any such mine will be under its directions. This Regulation applied from yesterday to the South Wales coalfield, where disputes as to wages are causing difficulty. The Board of Trade has directed the firms and companies concerned to carry on as usual until further instructions are issued. Meanwhile an Inter-Departmental Committee, representing the Board, Home Office, and Admiralty has been appointed to deal with questions of wages in the district. Miners and owners seem alike to have been surprised by this drastic step, and there is a renewal of talk concerning strikes and fair dealing, and definite opposition to the proposals if they are confined to South Wales. What the Government will do in detail is not yet revealed; but it is clear that they mean to settle all disputes. Things are not as they were, public opinion has changed, and there are possibilities in Government control and the Military Service Act which should make for firmness and good sense.

Zeppelins, after an intermission of nearly two months—due, perhaps, to reflection whether the game was worth the india-rubber—crossed the East Coast on Monday night. How many of them came is not stated; but the results are no more encouraging to the enemy than those of recent attempts at a raid. Though more than 100 bombs were dropped, the only casualties reported are one death from shock and injuries to sixteen persons. The material damage on our side was unimportant; but the German losses were severe, for two Zeppelins were completely destroyed, with their crews, falling into the sea in flames at different points off the coast—one off Durham and the other nine miles at sea off the Norfolk coast. This second machine was in trouble on the return journey, and unable to reach the coast before daybreak.

London was visited on Tuesday last just before noon by an aeroplane flying at a great height above the haze. Half-a-dozen bombs were dropped, with insignificant results. Clearly they were dropped at random. There seems little doubt that this raider did not escape, for the French authorities reported that, some two hours later, they brought down an aeroplane carrying two naval lieutenants, who had with them a large-scale map of London.

The reception given to the enemy is thus satisfactory all round. Incidentally, the alarmists who have been denouncing our means of defence outside London as miserably inadequate have some food for reflection. It is likely that these raids, in view of the recent and expensive losses of material and men by the enemy, will not be prosecuted so confidently as they were; but whether they are continued on a larger or a lesser scale, the main point is that, to judge from a good many attempts, they are unable to do any military damage of importance. We are at war, and military damage is the thing that matters. This being so, it would be a grave mistake to impoverish our supply of aeroplanes on the Somme front in order to meet attacks at home. Our airmen supply the eyes of our Army, and their constant and successfully daring work must not be interfered with or reduced in any way.

Seven fresh V.C.'s were announced in the "Gazette" of 25 November. Among them are Privates Robert Ryder and F. J. Edwards, of the Middlesex Regiment, and temporary Lieutenant-Colonel Roland Boys Bradford, of the Durham Light Infantry. The last-named is still well in the twenties! With a rare combination of skill and absolute fearlessness under fire of all descriptions, whilst commanding, by express request, a leading battalion in attack as well

as his own, he captured and defended an objective and made safe a flank in peril. Privates Ryder and Edwards, when their officers were all casualties, and retirement seemed imminent, dashed, single-handed, at the enemy—one with bombs, the other with a Lewis gun—and defeated the enemy! This will give a good idea of the performances of the seven V.C.'s generally. The most impressive arguments for the immortality of man are found at times to reside in acts.

At Bradfield College on Saturday Sir William Robertson, speaking to the O.T.C., declared the English public school boy could not be surpassed—perhaps he could not be equalled; and he touched on the fine work the young despatch riders had done in the early days of the war. Then he went on to speak of the war generally. We could be satisfied with what we had done so far, considering the start. But days of greater stress lay before us, and harder sacrifices must come. We must, to win the war, do the right thing in time.

We greatly admire the Serbians—an extraordinarily virile people—as our readers know. Great Britain is pledged to Serbia hardly less than it is pledged to Belgium. But to admire Serbia, to wish to see her uplifted, strengthened, enlarged—and given access to the Adriatic—is one proposition: to adopt the programme of the Jugo-Slavs is distinctly another. The map of the Jugo-Slavs is, in the exact sense of the term, extravagant. It includes, for example, Trieste! Italians might inquire, with pardonable irony: If it includes Trst (Trieste) in 1916, what may it not include in 1926? Who knows?—perhaps Rim (Rome) itself!

Italy, we must not forget, is our old friend and our great Ally to-day. If extravagant Jugo-Slav maps and literature were to find favour in this country, that excellent friendship and that valuable alliance might be roughly shaken—to the joy of the common and deadly enemy of British, Serbs, Italians—namely, Germany. We have more than once during the war been asked to draw attention to the danger of hurting the feelings of Italian friends and patriots which even non-official support of out-and-out Jugo-Slav ambitions is bound to cause; but we have refrained from discussing the question. The Jugo-Slav movement with maps to which attention has been lately drawn in the "Correspondence" of the SATURDAY REVIEW is, however, growing dangerous; and if it continues, the result, we fear, will only be helpful to the sinister designs of Germany and Austria. In the interests of gallant Serbia, of Great Britain, and of Italy, it had better be put away. After all, to-day our great work is not to remake Europe, but to unmake Germany. Wisely Lord Curzon, if we remember rightly, advised us all early in the war to leave the map alone and devote ourselves to the great task in hand. That task will take us all our time and energies. Remaking this State and that on paper or on platform may be a fascinating, but it is also to-day a perilous, diversion.

When the Pensions Bill reached the Committee stage on Monday last Mr. Hogge moved an amendment designed to change completely the structure of the Bill and set up a single, unified, centralised scheme—a Board consisting of a Pensions Minister and an Under-Secretary, instead of a Board of four persons, the former being directly responsible in the House of Commons and dealing with the powers and duties of the Chelsea Commissioners, the Army Council, the Admiralty, and the Statutory Committee. Some weeks since, when the main principles of the Bill became the subject of public discussion, we expressed exactly this desire for a single authority, in order to avoid the present tangle of separate bodies. The debate which followed revealed so strong a feeling in the House for unification and simplification that the Government accepted Mr. Hogge's amendment without proceeding to a division. After all, as Sir G. Toulmin pointed out, it need not follow that the responsible Minister scrap all the existing machinery. It

would, indeed, be very unwise to do that. Reform is in the air; but, just because we are at war, we cannot start everything afresh to-morrow. To expect someone to produce at once, with the air of a complacent conjurer, a new, complete, and all-satisfying means of solving this immense and intricate question of pensions is like asking a journalist to sit down and produce a poem equal to "Paradise Lost"! The Government have now drafted amendments in accordance with the feeling of the House as expressed by Mr. Hogge, and we hope they will get on with the work with the least possible delay. There is this to be said concerning the present fiasco: if the strong opposition revealed on Monday had found adequate expression at any earlier date, valuable time might have been saved. A Coalition cannot be expected always to coalesce with ease, since it is a temporary combination for special ends between parties that retain distinctive principles. But the special ends are all-important; the House of Commons represents the Nation; and the House should know its mind.

The text of a new Volunteer Bill was published on Thursday. The five sections are officially explained as follows: Volunteers are enabled to enter into special agreements for the duration of the war to undertake duties of national defence specified therein, and to undergo a definite course of training. A breach of their agreement will involve military penalties, and during its currency they will not be entitled, as are volunteers in ordinary circumstances, to quit their corps at fourteen days' notice. Resignation must be arranged with superior military authorities. Volunteers entering into special agreements under the terms of the Bill will be subject to military law during their preliminary training or performance of military duties, and officers will be subject to military law at all times.

The League to Enforce Peace is no doubt a humorous idea in itself. It is as if the doves met in cooing conclave and resolved to arm themselves with talons in order to tear to pieces the hawks. But the proceedings at the banquet last week, under the chairmanship of Mr. Taft, in New York do not strike us as altogether a subject for amusement. We do not quite understand why British subjects such as Lord Aberdeen should choose to be present at banquets or galas attended by Mr. Schiff, Mr. Ridder of the "Staatszeitung", and Captain Hecker of the German Army; nor can we understand why Lord Bryce and other British subjects should choose to send messages. Surely the best message Lord Bryce could send is one emphasising the horrors and infamies which the Belgians have suffered from the bloody beak and claws of Germany. The whole incident, as narrated by the Washington Correspondent of the "Times"—and published in the "Times" of Monday, 27 November—disgusts us. British people would do well to stand sternly aside from such affairs.

The world of letters was shocked on Wednesday by the news that M. Emile Verhaeren, rushing to catch a train at Rouen, had fallen under it and had been crushed to death. He was one of the few poets of recent years who have achieved an international reputation. Prominent among the writers of the Belgian Renaissance, he gave the world the most typical and distinguished interpretation of the Flemish genius, with its curious mixture of mysticism and Rabelaisian humour, and its quick alternations from religious fervour to pagan enjoyment. A symbolist and a seer of visions, he advanced from poignant autobiographical records to the dreams of Socialism and a study of the industrial forces of modern society, and finally to an evocation of cosmic emotion, the career of man in the universe. His richly coloured and emotional verse attacked the modern stuff of world problems as few poets have done. The religious instinct, testified by his drama, "Le Cloître", was always strong in him, and, strange as his sense of priesthood may have seemed to many, he had the elevation, in his later years, of a priest of humanity.

LEADING ARTICLES.

PEACE WITH DISGRACE.

THERE is no use in measuring words over the League to Enforce Peace banquet held in the United States last week. It is better to be straight and clean in a matter of this kind, and we believe, moreover, that the best opinion in the United States will be glad to hear what men of honour and gentlemen in this country think of the affair which was graced by the presence of Mr. Hermann Ridder, of the "Staatszeitung", Captain Hecker, of the German Army, Mr. Schiff, and other persons of that kind. The affair in question is regarded here as disgusting and offensive; and it is deplorable that Englishmen, Scotchmen, and Irishmen should have any truck whatever with it. Openly its moving spirits do not propose that the Allies shall sit down to a peace table with Germany. They are too much of the artful dodger for that. Their idea is to catch those pacifists and greenhorns here and all over the world who, though not well disposed towards Germany, and though not actually in the stop-the-war camp, are yet so intoxicated with the notion of perpetual peace that any hook baited with phrases about the brotherhood of man and the league of the nations will draw them. Once net in a considerable number of these sincere but confused, deluded people, and a step forward has been taken towards the goal which—as every intelligent man to-day knows—Germany is aiming at. Add a few benevolent statesmen—or people who at least have names recalling statesmen—and a further step, still more formidable, has been secured in the interests of the enemy. That is the game; and though there is a natural temptation to treat it as merely ridiculous or farcical, we had better be careful, for there is plenty of money behind this move and also plenty of misdirected zeal in a good many honest enough people here. Besides, behind it lie the devilish cunning and will of the most powerful nation in the world to-day—it is impossible to deny that Germany is still that, though she knows well that, unless she can force some sort of draw within the next year or so, she must lose her position and ultimately go down.

We have no hesitation and no difficulty in explaining why peace banquets and their intrigues at the present time, no matter where and by whom they are held, are disgusting and impudent—i.e., shameless—from the standpoint of men of honour and gentlemen in this country and in the countries of our Allies. They are so to be felt and described because they are welcome and helpful to Germany, to the nation which broke its treaties, cast aside all rules of warfare among civilised races; robbed, ravished, murdered, and enslaved Belgians, French, and Serbs; and is even now characteristically engaged in sinking hospital ships and in starving prisoners.

That is one reason why the gorge of an honest man rises at peace banquets and the like—got up to the advantage of the enemy in the name of God! Another reason is that such intrigues are a gross insult to the glorious soldiers and sailors of the Allied Powers who have been killed or wounded in the struggle. Speaking for this country alone—though one and all our Allies will certainly take the same line—it would be an endless disgrace if we were to make any peace with Germany except the crushing and conclusive one which the Prime Minister has enunciated in noble language; for the country would thereby break its plighted word to every man who has fallen since August 1914, and to the families of each of those men. If anything

the disgrace would be even more marked in the case of Great Britain than in that of France and Russia, because for more than a year and a half we recruited men largely and very loudly by means of this pledge. It was printed on hundreds of thousands of posters spread throughout the kingdom. A very large number, possibly the majority, of these men would not have joined at all under the defunct so-called "voluntary system" had they not been solemnly assured that we should fight to a finish and absolutely enforce drastic terms of a conclusive peace on Germany.

But it is not only an insult to the dead to dabble in peace talk and intrigues to-day—that may be safe from an intriguing point of view, because the dead can do nothing. There are the living to be considered, too. What will the men, for example, on the Somme and Ancre—privates and officers alike—say and think if they discover that any persons of their race are entering, however vaguely, into any base peace manœuvres with friends of the enemy? The British Army in France and elsewhere bears on the whole quite good-naturedly with our little foibles at home. True, now and again one of the soldiers, back in "blighty" for a few days' respite from mud and shells and misery, expresses mild surprise that we wear so many funny knickknacks or badges in our buttonholes. But he is not very censorious about this curious little hobby. It rather tickles him than otherwise. This, however, will not be the attitude of our friend if he finds us flirting with these hyphenated persons across the Atlantic and billing and cooing over peace proposals got up in the German interest. He may be a young man from the trenches, but we shall scarcely get over him in this matter. The soldiers will not put up with this weakness or treachery or both. They will say, if it is not stamped out and if British people are not sternly forbidden to hobnob with German peace banqueters and to lend their names: "Why should we sacrifice ourselves in the trenches if impostors at home are allowed to banquet with Germany? Why go to almost certain wounds and death and to absolutely certain misery and mud in the trenches if the end of it all is to be a base, craven peace with Germany?" And the soldiers will be perfectly justified in arguing thus. It is not good enough giving up life or limb for fellow-countrymen who are ready to traffic, however indirectly or vaguely, with the friends of the enemy over disgusting and humiliating Peace banquets.

So far as this country is concerned there must be an end absolutely and at once to anything in the nature of participation in these peace intrigues. Every British subject must cut them dead; and anyone under the allegiance of this country who plays into the enemy's hands by lending them aid, indirect or direct, should be called to stern and instant account. Peace meetings here, even when they are not, or do not seem to be, affiliated to these disgusting and impudent movements elsewhere, will have to be dealt with in the same spirit. They have nothing to do with liberty; they are licentious. We would not discourage such gatherings by forbidding the Press to report their proceedings: we would discourage them by suppression pure and simple; and this should be the rule, whether they are Germanic, pro-Germanic, or cosmopolite in origin. The Secretary of State for War, in a trenchant speech this week in Parliament, declined to allow Mr. Bertrand Russell to lecture in military areas. He was absolutely right to decline. But peace gatherings are quite as mischievous to-day as No-Conscription arguments. We have got the No-Conscriptionists under, as

Germany by now must have come sadly to recognise. They roared like lions for a year and a half and scared the Thibses of public life—though it was really only Snug the Joiner! To-day they bleat as softly as any lamb. It is time we attuned the pacifists, pro-German and others, to the same key.

THE ADMIRALTY.

THE changes at the Admiralty and in the command of the Grand Fleet are the result, we think, first, of the revival of enemy submarine warfare against our merchant shipping on a decidedly formidable scale, and the failure, so far, of the authorities to cope with the evil: second, of the recent raids in the Channel: third, of—it must be said—the severe reticence or, as some may prefer to call it, the want of candour in the reports of various naval actions, great and small, by which the public has been much stirred and disquieted. It would be a mistake to say that these changes have been the result entirely of ignorant popular or Press clamour. There has been some clamour certainly; but the movement has originated and obtained driving force in other and quite responsible quarters. At the time of the Battle of Jutland the Germans made claims of a great victory, partly for home and partly for neutral consumption. These claims were absurd. As a fact the German Fleet made off—quite reasonably and without any particular loss of sea honour—when our Grand Fleet came up. Moreover, the German Fleet was substantially battered, and it is not injudicious to believe that it suffered quite as heavy casualties as it inflicted. Yet it did contrive to withdraw, and it is the safer plan for us to assume that some at least of its injured ships have by now been well healed—for the German construction is held by competent judges to be distinctly good: that means that the German ships can take a good deal of punishment, and yet—when circumstances are not altogether unfavourable, as they were at the Falkland Islands—slip home and get refitted. Hence it is generally accepted to-day that the Battle of Jutland was not by any means a decisive victory. More is known of it than was known early last June—when, on the information offered, one could but reach the conclusion that the Germans had been most signally defeated. It is argued that, at first, reticence led the public and those who direct public opinion to the view that the British were heavily defeated: then it induced the public, in a reaction, to believe that the German Fleet had been put down more than was the case.

In short, there has been a good deal of unfortunate misunderstanding in the matter.

There has also been a complaint that there has been too marked a disposition to "whitewash" the chief figures of some three or four unfortunate naval incidents, since the start indeed of the war. But into this we shall not go, beyond uttering the mere commonplace accepted, in theory, by presumably everyone: that whitewash in peace and security is one thing, whitewash in war and peril quite another.

As to the Channel raids of late they seem to fall naturally under this same heading of reticence. They have not been particularly deadly: and probably if the public knew the details it would be easier in mind than it is. We are not profoundly disturbed by this matter of raids: truth to say, it has not imperilled the British Fleet or the British food. It is annoying, rather humiliating. It shows some daring and "cheek" on the part of the enemy. We can let it rest at that for the present.

The submarine campaign is, to our mind, far more serious. More than a year and a half ago one of the cleverest members of the Government, though not the highest placed, remarked to the writer that the submarine danger—then being scoffed at and named a farce and a dismal failure at that, and so forth—seemed to him the most threatening we had to face in this country. The remark to-day does not seem so very wide of the mark. The submarines will not starve us out: perhaps—though we should not care to try

it!—they would not be able to do that even if they established a real blockade of the British Islands; for blockades are run. Yet it is a grave problem. A great mass of shipping has been destroyed, and the casualties do not diminish. This is undoubtedly one of the chief reasons which, by causing an uneasy feeling, has led to the Admiralty changes. We fear there is no immediate cure for the submarine disease. The Navy, it is true, with splendid enterprise, got the first submarine campaign well under. But since then the enemy has learnt things, and, moreover, he has built on a more formidable scale and works farther afield. All we can hope is that new organisation will prove effective. A policy of better dispersion, and also of more protection—the ideal would be to arm each of the merchant vessels with, not one but three guns, a big order!—will, let us hope, put a better complexion on the matter presently.

As to the personal side of the Naval changes, we shall prefer at this stage to be, not uncandid but reticent! The removal of not only Admiral Jellicoe from the Grand Fleet, but also inevitably at least one of his chief men, is, of course, not a trifling matter. Which post is actually the greater and more momentous to-day—the command of the Grand Fleet or the First Sea Lordship, may be a moot question. There is this to be said: the two most famous seamen in this country to-day—or, indeed, in the world—are now placed in the two indisputably greatest sea posts, and that should prove to the good. In saying this we do not, of course, overlook Lord Fisher; but Lord Fisher is seventy-six years of age—so, without going into a displeasing and *passé* discussion as to his gifts, it can be generally agreed that the present and the future must rest with younger men.

One word on the subject of naval preparation before the war. The statement that we were perfectly prepared must be taken with drastic reservations. We were not prepared against submarine campaigns. We had scarcely more than played with the problem. Hence we have had to improvise as the war has proceeded. A great deal more ought to have been done in this matter long before the war began. It was practically overlooked. We forgot that we might have to fight chiefly under the sea as well as chiefly under the land. There are Beaumont Hamels and Thiepvals to be tackled, not only under the land but under the water, too; only, in the former case we are to-day the attackers, whilst in the latter we have to be content with being, in the main, the defenders.

THE DIFFICULTIES IN GREECE.

THOSE who believe in the democratic control of foreign policy must find their faith rudely shaken when they read the debate in the House of Commons. In almost all these debates which are concerned with diplomacy we find, stridently expressed, a touching belief in the short cut, combined with that most invulnerable form of dogmatism which is based on ignorance. Yet history shows that a successful foreign policy is based on long views and exact knowledge of the facts, and if the mental qualities which are necessary for these are combined with a strong will you have that rarest of men, a strong Foreign Minister. But how many great international statesmen have the nations of Europe produced in the last century? Metternich, who prolonged an outworn *régime*, the Czar Nicholas, who valiantly fought a European revolution, Palmerston perhaps, Bismarck undoubtedly, Cavour in his comparatively narrow sphere, and Salisbury, last of the Europeans, who scoffed at the Concert and yet kept it alive. When we realise how rare is success in foreign policy, and how complex are the problems which have to be faced, we read with some impatience the confident assertions of writers who are without responsibility, and of politicians who are without knowledge.

THE SATURDAY REVIEW is not employed to defend the present Foreign Secretary, but it does seem necessary to protest against some of the rather wild rhetoric which is popular to-day on the question of Greece.

Democratic diplomatists, we may note, generally express themselves interrogatively, and, like jesting Pilate, they do not wait for an answer. "Why is not King Constantine deposed?" and "Why is not Greece blockaded?" Such questions are easily asked, but the answers are more complicated than amateur international authorities imagine. Let us make some effort to understand the problems which the Foreign Office had to face before we join in the chorus of uninformed indignation. In the first place Great Britain is one nation in a great international coalition, which includes Governments of varying proclivities, and to some extent conflicting interests. In that coalition there is no one nation that claims a lead, and fate has not ordained that any one of the Allies should possess a statesman of outstanding authority. It is obviously of much greater importance to the cause of civilisation that the Great Alliance should be kept intact than that Greece should be either an enemy or a friend. The whole Balkan question is not more than a side issue of the Great War, and the most fatal of diplomatic errors is to allow minor questions to confuse the supreme problem. Our Government, therefore, has not had a clean slate on which to write its ultimatum: it has had to consult and it has often had to wait, though it is quite possible that waiting may have sometimes been more a result of its own inherent qualities than of constraining circumstances. In the second place the Allies have had to deal with a people divided against itself. If the Greek problem could have been solved by the deposition of the Greek King we do not believe that dynastic consideration would have prevented the Allies from taking the necessary action. Lord Robert Cecil has stated as much, and there is no kind of reason to doubt his assurance: we believe in Lord Robert Cecil; he has lofty ideals, he is a man of honour and of intellect. The Greek Prince who recently visited England found that the natural influences of kinship did not weigh against considerations of State policy, and if he had visited Petrograd he would have made the same discovery. Republican France knows that her monarchical Allies are, like herself, considering the freedom of peoples and not the fortune of kings. But the difficulty goes deeper. A section of the Greeks have fallen victims to the German propaganda, and this section includes a number of influential Army leaders. We do not sufficiently realise in this island the glamour or the terror of the German Army. King Constantine himself is a pupil of Potsdam, and he has communicated to many of his officers his own belief in German invincibility, and his acceptance of German military standards as a substitute for the Decalogue and other moral codes. From our standpoint the German party in Greece is blind to Greek interests, and it is difficult to believe that even a completely victorious Germany could satisfy Turkey, Bulgaria and Greece at the same time. Germany's success in creating and sustaining a considerable faction of her own has probably two bases: first, the natural terror created by her treatment of other small nations, and second, an implied guarantee, that the King and his coterie will be protected in their autocratic and militarist methods. German friendship is held to be a good insurance against constitutionalism and the despised "Parliamentism" of England and France, and against M. Venizelos and his majority. When King Constantine, whose throne is based on no merely mystical social contract, but on a very plain written agreement, declares that he is responsible to God alone, he knows that he requires some human backing, and he hopes to obtain it from Berlin. But whatever the cause the division of Greece is a fact. Hence comes the third great practical difficulty with which the Allies are confronted. It is true that we have in our sea-power the means of coercing Greece by a blockade, but the blockade would injure our supporters in Greece as well as our enemies, so that the generally sound rule of being "a friend to our friends and a foe to our foes" is by no means simple and easy of application in this instance.

We have dwelt on the three difficulties of a perplexing problem, but each of these difficulties has a miti-

gating element. The coalition of Allies has at its head the three Great Powers who are guarantors of the Greek Constitution, and as guarantors have a locus standi which is more than mere diplomatic punctilio. The division of Greece has created an alternative Government and organisation with a great national statesman at its head, and has made possible that neutral zone which can be used to defend the army of General Sarrail against attack by the German faction in Greece. This zone can be insisted upon and protected without injuring our friends as a blockade would necessarily injure them. The diplomacy of the Allies has been long-suffering and patient, if not procrastinating, but, if we may judge by Lord Robert Cecil's speech and by the action of the French Admiral, it has at last reached the stage of definite decision. M. Venizelos's "provisional Government" will have a definite territory, an organised army, and an assured revenue—three useful elements in the creation of a new State. It has formally declared war on Germany and Bulgaria, which is certainly an action characteristic of an independent Government, and the British Foreign Office has stated, through Lord Robert Cecil, that M. Venizelos will never be abandoned by the Allies. When Lord Robert Cecil states such a thing he means it. King Constantine has been told that if he will not fight for us he will be deprived of the means of fighting against us. The crisis, so long and astutely postponed by his diplomacy and by the patience of the Allies, has now been reached, and it remains to be seen whether the Allies have the firmness and the properly prepared means to enforce their ultimatum. The news at the end of this week certainly suggests a very grave position, where firmness is absolutely necessary. According to a Reuter telegram received in London yesterday, the Greek Government has addressed a reply to Admiral du Fournet's ultimatum, in which it gives a direct refusal to the demand for the surrender of arms. It thus looks very much as if the pro-German element in Greece had finally made up its mind to dare everything. The unbridled licence of the Reservists points that way. They are now openly threatening that they will take the Venizelists as hostages, and so hamper Admiral du Fournet's measures in case of the rejection of the ultimatum. It is a threat of civil war. Had this occurred earlier, it would probably have occupied and retarded the army of Salonica even more than it has been delayed by the long negotiations which have at length come to an end. If civil war can be avoided, and at the same time the military objects of the Allies are secured, there will be something to be said in defence of the long delays. But there will still remain the necessity of controlling the Greek coasts and islands so that they can no longer be used as submarine bases. The protection of transport to Salonica is as important as the defence of General Sarrail against attacks from the south. A great step has been taken by the enforced departure of the hostile ambassadors and their staffs and by the beginnings of control over the Greek police. But very much more will have to be done before this essential object has been secured, and the deplorable losses by submarine attack in the Mediterranean are one of the worst dangers in the present situation. No one is blind to the difficulties, but France, Italy and Great Britain, the three great Mediterranean Powers, should continue in a strenuous campaign against the submarine menace. Only if this is removed can General Sarrail be expected to prosecute the Salonica adventure to any profitable end. Above all, do not let us be misled into believing that the Balkans offer us any short cut to final victory. That can only be attained by defeat of the great German army of the West.

THE GREAT WAR.

APPRECIATION (No. 122) BY VIEILLE MOUSTACHE.
ROUMANIA.

THE great strategy of Hindenburg for the conquest of Roumania has unfolded itself after leaving the military world in doubt for many weeks as

where the serious blow would fall upon the little Roumanian kingdom—a proof that mystery is the very essence and aim of strategy. Readers of these pages may recall that as far back as 9 September it was suggested that the danger of a blow directed at Orsova, and of the insecurity of the Iron Gates of the Danube, might prove the opportunity of the old Field-Marshal. Again, on 14 October, in Appreciation No. 115*, it was pointed out that now control over the movements of both the Army and Navy of the Central Powers had passed to Hindenburg, he was hardly the man to permit the seamen of the Fleet to remain in idleness, but that he would inaugurate a Danube river campaign that would ensure him the mastery not only of the Iron Gates, but of the control of the Lower Danube itself. The German strategy in its south-eastern theatre has unquestionably been of a fine type. Falkenhayn has won all the important passes on the summits of the Transylvanian Alps. He had to make it a leisurely piece of work, for he had his heavy guns to drag up. He had also to time his task so that his difficulties would not be controlled by the elements on the mountains. Once he had secured the foot-hills on Roumanian territory, he had to dig himself in and await developments elsewhere, in order to co-operate in the great scheme. The forcing of the passage through the mountains at Orsova has enabled Hindenburg to flood southern Roumania with Austro-German troops. When these come into line with the columns that have been brought through the Vulcan, Roter Turm, and Torzburg Passes we must look for the completion of the strategic system which is designed to sweep Roumania from south to north. A smart piece of manoeuvre strategy on the part of the Austro-German columns descending from the Vulcan Pass has already placed the defenders of Orsova between two fires, with the expected result. The fact that Mackensen has crossed the great river at several points seals for the present the doom of southern Roumania.

Hindenburg, by his masterly move to secure the left bank of the great water highway, is now in clover. His communications by water are secured. A fleet of ice-breakers should afford a clear passage to his fighters during the winter months. His columns can be fed from numberless points in their first march eastward. The river ports of Calafat, Corabia, Simniza, and Giurgevo, on the northern bank of the great river, are connected with railway feeders leading into the plains of the Kingdom. He is now independent of the elements on the mountain passes, being able to control his operations. As his march progresses northwards his front contracts, and, until he meets with opposition somewhat tougher than he has yet encountered, there would be little to prevent a move to the frontier of Russia herself. As his armies move forward the supply for them is facilitated by local resources, and the surplus of the rich country is borne to the rear and carried back by the great waterway to the depôts of the Central Powers. That the Field-Marshal does not anticipate an opposition that he cannot overcome seems probable in that he has dispatched reinforcements to the Macedonian front. A country, however, is not conquered so long as its field armies remain unbroken and at large. Roumania has not yet thrown her collective strength into the struggle. She remains undefeated so long as her armies can offer battle to the armies now opposed to her. A heavy toll exacted from the latter is not what the German can afford at the present moment. A winter campaign in the great plains of Roumania lies before him. He has already,

by the capture of the Iron Gates, broken the back of his worst difficulties; but with the main Roumanian Army as yet unbeaten, he has to compete with the armies of her Ally, who are hastening from the north. Roumania, as the world knows, entered the arena of war on the side of the Allies for a good purpose of her own. It is much to be feared that her conception of modern war was not of a high order. Independently of having failed totally to grasp that her armies might be confronted by the finest war machine in existence, she was too deficient in war material, both in quantity and quality, to meet an antagonist who had learnt by experience not only the great value of these auxiliaries of modern warfare, but also the absolute necessity of a superabundance of them.

It seems that, as the result of an Allied War Council, the task of bringing the armament of Roumania up to war requirements was allotted to France. As the only Ally capable of affording fighting assistance, Russia tendered the services of her armies. Roumania, as an apprentice in war, was bound to require help, both in tools and instructors. Fresh and keen as she was, she soon discovered that she was unable to stand up and face more experienced troops. Roumania, like most of the Balkan States, has in pre-war days drawn upon Krupp for her armament. It is this fact which gives to Germany such a hold upon the actions of minor States when the torch of war is once alight.

However, despite the dark outlook to-day, as time progresses, not only will Roumania gain the experience that she requires, but also her armies should be revitalised by the presence of Allies in their numbers, and the guns and war material she so sadly needs.

Hindenburg, when he has marshalled the armies of Falkenhayn and Mackensen, may be expected to strike quickly, and strike hard. His ambition will be satisfied if he can drive his opponent's army across the Russian frontier. He could thereby shorten his own defensive line in the Eastern theatre by many hundreds of miles and be able to send back to the principal theatres of war the many divisions of which they stand in need. But there is no reason he should have it all his own way. A distinct defeat may cost him the allegiance of Bulgaria to the cause of the Central Powers, and place Russia in her stride athwart the great highway to Stamboul and Baghdad. We learn much from our opponents in war, and equally Germany may learn from the Allies the price that has to be paid for diversions and excursions away from the main stages of the theatres of war.

Hindenburg may yet discover that he has overreached himself. He failed completely in his first conception of strategy, which was to slice Roumania at the waist and drive the armies of the Kingdom to the south before Russia could arrive upon the scene. In the attempt now chosen he will have to face two armies in place of one.

MIDDLE ARTICLES.

SIR ROGER DE COVERLEY IN CAMBRIDGE.

By Sir James Frazer.

On a recent visit to Worcestershire I was able, with the kind permission of the owner of Coverley Hall, to make a fresh search in the archives of the Spectator Club, and among the papers I discovered one which seems, like the others which I have already edited from the same collection,* to have been written for the "Spectator" by some author unknown, but rejected, or at all events laid aside, by the editor on the slender chance of inserting

* The SATURDAY REVIEW, 27 March 1915 and 10 April 1915.

it some day when he might have no better entertainment to offer his readers. The same reason may justify, or excuse, its appearance in print after lying in manuscript for over two centuries. I reproduce it exactly as it came into my hands, apart from a few small changes of spelling to accommodate it to our modern orthography. Internal evidence proves clearly that the writer was an Oxford man, but otherwise he gives no clue to his identity.

I DO not know that I have anywhere mentioned that Sir Roger de Coverley, though he is not himself learned, has a very great—I may even say an excessive—respect for learning and learned men. I have seen him stand, hat in hand, in Fleet Street speaking deferentially to a common scribbler, a literary hack, who had just descended from his garret in Grub Street, where he earns his bread in the sweat of his brow by lampooning the most eminent characters and belauding the basest for any man who will hire his services at a shilling a sheet. If I mistake not, the fellow has stood in the pillory more than once for his scurrilous libels, and has received the tribute of public esteem for his talents in the shape of dead cats and rotten eggs, which to him are what laurels and ivy are to writers of a different stamp. Very much astonished, I can assure you, he seemed to be when the baronet bent low (the wretch is a squat, dumpy little man, and Sir Roger is tall and slender) to catch the words of wisdom that trickled and spluttered in a thick voice from his grimy, bristly lips; for this literary oracle has an impediment in his speech, appears to suffer from a chronic catarrh, and I much doubt whether he washes and shaves more than once a fortnight. He was plainly ill at ease under the old knight's attentions, shuffled with his feet, cast furtive glances about him all the time, as if he expected to see a bailiff turning the corner of the next street to nab him for his score at the alehouse, and experienced an obvious relief when, the meeting over, he could slink back to his garret, there to resume his congenial task of blackening virtue and whitewashing vice. "A great writer, I believe," said Sir Roger, looking after him, "a great writer! though I could wish he would pay more heed to his linen. But I suppose his head is too full of learning to attend to such things."

Sir Roger himself is a man of very few books, and knows little about our modern authors. I do not believe he has so much as heard the name of Mr. Pope, who in the last few years has taught our English numbers to flow with a mellifluous cadence they never knew before. I once spoke of Milton to him, but he shook his head. "John Milton," he said, "John Milton. Yes, I have heard of the rascal. A regicide, sir, a regicide! He might thank his stars that His gracious Majesty King Charles (God bless him!) did not bring his grey hairs with sorrow to the grave. No, sir, don't talk to me about that canting crop-eared cur!" He grew so warm that I was fain to turn the conversation by hurriedly mentioning Lovelace and Cowley, who, I knew, as Cavaliers, stood high in Sir Roger's good graces. The cloud at once passed from the old knight's brow and gave place to a beaming smile. "Gentlemen of sound principles, both of them," said he, "and very good poets too, I'll be bound. No man, sir, can write good poetry who has not a proper respect for Church and King. As for John what-do-ye-call-him, that snivelling, glum-faced son of a ——" He was about to burst out again on the sore subject of Milton, when I dexterously interposed the name of Herrick, and again the knight's passion calmed down as suddenly as it had arisen. For in Sir Roger's youth Herrick's verses were at the height of the fashion; he had learned many of them by heart, and set them on the same lofty pedestal with Baker's "Chronicle", which is the only other book I ever heard him quote with approval. I had struck the right key. He hummed to himself some of the poet's lines—I caught something about love and fleeting youth and fading roses, and saw by his eye that his thoughts had wandered far away to other days and distant scenes; perhaps he was young again, roaming the hawthorn lanes and cowslip meadows of Worcestershire on a sunshiny day in spring, or lingering in the twilight on the willow-fringed banks of Severn, to mark the red autumnal sun setting in mist beyond the Welsh mountains. When he came to him-

self at length, he had recovered all his usual placidity and serenity of temper; Milton and the other crop-eared curs were quite forgotten.

As his journeys to and from Worcestershire take him through Oxford, he is well acquainted with that famous city, and a warm admirer of it, though I have never been able to determine exactly whether it is his learning or the loyalty of the place that excites his admiration in the higher measure; for in his reference to it he hardly seems to distinguish between the claims of the University town to public gratitude, and the claims of the city to the gratitude of the people. His father attended King Charles the Martyr when he was at his court at Oxford, and Sir Roger has many stories to tell of the monarch's gracious demeanour to scholars and learned men: how he dined with them in the college halls, and prayed with them in the choir-chapels; how, on summer afternoons, he strolled with them in the cloisters of Magdalen, or played at bowls with them in the gardens of St. John's; and how, when he rode out of the town for the last time, before the battle of Naseby, he was attended to the gate by the Vice-Chancellor, the Heads of Houses, and the Doctors of Divinity, all in scarlet, who did homage to him, and bade him God-speed before he mounted his horse. Then he leaped into the saddle, the music struck up, and the whole cavalcade was in motion. As he rode away he turned once more in the stirrups to wave a good-bye to the loyal city he was never to set eyes on again; and the doctors in their red gowns at the gates stood gazing after him and shading their eyes with their hands, till the last of the cavalcade disappeared in a cloud of dust, and the music died away in the distance. Such are the reminiscences which Sir Roger loves to relate of Oxford. But as for the libraries and the wrangling disputations of that seat of learning, he has little to say about them.

I have frequently had occasion to mention the Templar, a gentleman of some reading and still great pretensions in polite letters, who is a member of a club, and there lays down the law on all questions of taste with a confidence which I envy, though I cannot always share. As he was bred at Cambridge he has a partiality, which I do not blame, for that University, which he would award—in my humble opinion, very unjustly—the palm of antiquity and renown above all other universities to the banks of the Isis. Accordingly, when Sir Roger alludes to the glories of Oxford, the Templar is apt to vaunt what he considers the superior glories of Cambridge, and seems nettled if any member of the Club disputes its claim to pre-eminence. As for Sir Roger, while he regards Oxford with affection, he has long looked on Cambridge with deep distrust as a breeding-place of that most pernicious varlet, Oliver Cromwell. To abate his prejudice on this head the Templar proposed, a few days ago, that Sir Roger should visit Cambridge together, assuring him that if he only saw the place he would like it as well as Oxford, or rather better; besides, knowing Sir Roger's profound reverence for the very name of learning, he artfully held out as a bait the prospect of his making the acquaintance of a scholar, who, if he may believe the Templar, is one of the most learned and celebrated men in Europe. This had a visible effect on Sir Roger, and after a little hesitation he agreed to undertake the journey, only bargaining that the philosopher, as he calls me, should make one of the party. I readily agreed to the proposal, for, having had the misfortune (as the Templar would think it) to be bred at the sister University, I had never visited Cambridge, and felt some curiosity to see a place about which I had heard so much. So it was agreed that we should meet next morning at the "Rainbow", in Holborn, from which the coach plies to Cambridge.

We met next morning, as agreed, at the "Rainbow". Sir Roger was attended by his butler, armed with holster pistols for fear of highwaymen, who have been on the road about Royston three days before. I need not trouble my readers with an account of my journey. It passed off without adventure. We saw nothing of the highwaymen—at least, of the live ones—for we passed two dead ones hanging in chains on a gibbet a little way beyond Hatfield. Towards the

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the day Sir Roger grew weary and fell asleep, but out dusk he was roused by the sound of church bells, and, putting our heads out of the window, we saw the lights of Cambridge in the distance. As we went into the town all the bells in the steeples seemed to be jangling to welcome us; the clangour was almost deafening. The Templar told us that this was the bell-tower, which is still rung in Cambridge every evening, and it has been rung since the days of William the Conqueror. It was dark when we rattled into the courtyard of the "Red Lion". We could see nothing but some tall gables faintly outlined against the sky and a long wooden gallery, dimly lighted by a few guttering oil-lamps, which appeared to run round the yard.

Next morning we were up betimes, and, having broken our fast, we prepared to sally forth. The Templar addressed us with some solemnity. "Gentlemen", said he, "I shall conduct you first to my own college, the college of the Holy and Undivided Trinity. It is the greatest college in either University." At this point I was seized with a violent fit of coughing. The Templar paused, and, looking hard at me, "I hope, sir", says he, somewhat tartly, "that you do not mean to dispute that proposition?" "Not at all, sir; but at all", I stuttered between the fits; "but I am afflicted with a chronic cough, which always seizes me, and I do not know why, whenever I hear the name of Trinity College. Many Oxford men, I believe, suffer in the same way." "Well", resumed the Templar, "as I was saying, when I was interrupted by our suffering friend, I am about to carry you to Trinity College and to make you known to the Master, Dr. Coverley. He is unquestionably the greatest scholar in Christendom." Here I was again overtaken by a fit of coughing more violent than before. At that the Templar seemed to lose patience, and, snatching up his hat, "Gentlemen", he cried, "follow me. I will lead the way". He did so, and, tripping at his heels, we descended into the courtyard and passed out into the street. I know not what devil possessed me, but no sooner were we in the street than I turned sharp to the right and had taken a few steps in that direction when the Templar ran after me and, laying his hand on my shoulder, "For God's sake, sir", says he, "don't go that way". "And why not, sir?" I asked, with some surprise. "Because, sir", says he, "that is the way to Christ's College and Sidney Sussex College." As I still looked bewildered, he clapt his mouth to my ear and whispered hoarsely, "The college of Milton and the college of Oliver Cromwell! Sir Roger would rather be blasted by lightning than put his foot inside either of them." I understood at once. We turned back and rejoined Sir Roger, who had happily noticed and overheard nothing, being occupied in his daily exercise of clearing his pipes, as he calls it, in the fresh morning air and contemplating with great satisfaction the novel scenes around him. We now saw, what the darkness of the night before had prevented us from perceiving, that the street was very narrow, and was straightened still more by the projecting gables of the houses, which seemed as if they would meet overhead. I confess I was a little disgusted to behold so many relics of the barbarous taste of Queen Elizabeth's day, with their heavy black timbers and their cramped little lattice-windows and their diamond-shaped panes of bottle-green glass. How painfully these Gothic antiquities, as I may call them, contrasted with a few of those neat square houses of red brick which have so happily come into fashion in our own time, and particularly under the glorious reign of Her present Majesty.

From this street, which I think they call Petty Cury, we turned into a large open square. "This", said the Templar, "is the market-place." Indeed, we could see for ourselves that it was so, for it was covered with booths, where hucksters were busy selling their wares. The stalls, with their display of flowers, fruit, vegetables, and so forth, made a pretty enough show in the sunshine, for it was a fine morning. Thence we threaded our way through a labyrinth of narrow streets, or, rather, lanes, all overhung by the same

unsightly protruding houses, which blocked out the sunlight and threatened to fall on our heads. At last, emerging from these alleys, we came to a great arched gateway, flanked by tall embattled towers, with many coats-of-arms blazoned on its grey, time-worn front. "This is Trinity", said the Templar, shortly. I think he was in a huff, and feared to set me off coughing again. So, without giving us time to scrutinise the scutcheons, he led us through the archway into the court. A spacious enough court it was, I am free to admit, with a great expanse of grass, a fountain playing among flower-beds in the centre, the hall with its tall oriel on the opposite side, and the chapel with its long line of buttresses on our right.

Hardly allowing us leisure to look around, the Templar led, or, rather, hurried, us across the court to a porch, where he knocked at a door. A venerable manservant opened. "Is the Master at home?" asked the Templar. "He is, sir", answered the servant, "but does he expect you?" "He does", replied the Templar; "I wrote to him, and have his answer." "Then come this way, sir", said the butler. He led us up a stately staircase and ushered us into the Master's study, a large, wainscotted chamber, partly lined with bookcases, and lighted by several tall windows that looked out on the court by which we had entered. The room was empty, and we had to wait a few minutes. Then we heard voices approaching, the door opened, and the Master stood before us, a tall, burly figure in cap and gown. Behind him trotted a little man of deferential manners, whom the Master introduced to us as the Vice-Master, Mr. Walker, and to whom he handed his cap. "Sir Roger", said the Master, "I am glad to make your acquaintance. On my journeys to Worcester, where my duties as prebendary take me for two months every summer, I have often passed your gates." "Then I hope, sir", interposed Sir Roger, "that the next time you come down you will do me the honour of paying a visit to the Hall." "I shall be happy to do so, sir", replied the Master, with great suavity; "I shall be very happy to do so. Sir Roger, you have a good name in the county as a staunch Churchman and King's man. In these days of Whiggery and atheism—I leave you, sir, as a layman to apply the appropriate epithets to those pests of our time—I say, sir, in these days of Whiggery and atheism, it is a pleasure to make the acquaintance of a gentleman of such sound principles. I shall be happy to visit you at Coverley."

This gracious acceptance of his invitation quite won Sir Roger's heart, and he prattled like a child, the Master listening to him with a benevolent, almost fatherly smile, his massive brow unbent, and what I thought must be the habitual sternness of his expression sensibly relaxed. It was surprising to see how these two men, apparently so different, drew to each other; it was almost as if they had conceived a sudden and mutual affection. I have said that Sir Roger looks up to learned men with a genuine reverence; this time he had to do with a scholar indeed, and no sham. The Master felt and accepted the homage paid from the heart to his profound learning; he basked, as it were, in a wintry sunshine, for time has whitened his locks too, and furrowed his cheeks. I watched the two old men with interest, for they made a picture, sitting there together in the sunshine at the window that looked out on the Great Court. But my thoughts wandered, and I hardly heeded what they said. However, from scraps of their talk I gathered that Sir Roger was telling the Master about Coverley, and relating some of his best stories—how well I knew them all—about the ghosts at the Hall, and how the chaplain laid them, especially that good old ghost with the bloody hand and the clanking chains—oh, Lord, how often I have endured him—and Moll White and her witcheries—that old, old story about the buttermilk and the broomstick—and so on, and so on.

At last the Master seemed to recollect himself, and, pulling out his watch, he started and said, "Gentlemen, I am sorry I must leave you. I had an appointment with the Regius Professor of Greek at eleven o'clock, and I see that it is now nearly half-past. I

had not perceived how the time was going". "The Regius Professor of Greek!" repeated Sir Roger, in an awe-stricken voice. "A very great scholar, I'll be bound, sir." "So-so, sir; so-so", answered the Master, frowning slightly and pursing his lips—the smile had quite gone out of his face by this time; "he has his limitations, sir, as I suppose we all have. I should be surprised, sir, to learn that he had ever made a critical study of Tzetzes his scholia on Lycophron. His views on the digamma in Homer are most unsound, most unsound; and would you believe it, sir—it seems incredible, but it is true—that he once wrote a copy of anapaestic verse in which he disregarded—actually disregarded—the synaphea?" "God bless my soul!" cried Sir Roger, quite shocked, "you don't say so?" "But I do, though", said the Master, "Walker, is it not so?" The Vice-Master had been gazing abstractedly out of the window, absorbed in the contemplation of two young men engaged in the last round of a single combat on the grass plot outside. Thus suddenly recalled to his duty he turned hastily round, saying, "Certainly, Master, without question it is so. You are undoubtedly right." "You hear what the Vice-Master says, gentlemen", said the Master; "yes, yes, in his poetical afflatus Joshua forgot all about the synaphea! Ha! ha! ha! He completely forgot the synaphea!"* He leaned back in his chair, laughing heartily. Then he rose, saying hurriedly, "But I must be gone. Gentlemen, I wish you good day. Sir Roger, I am your very humble servant", with a deep bow. "Mr. So-and-So" (naming the Templar), "your servant", with a bow. Then, turning to me, and barely inclining his tall figure, he added with a jerk, "Good morning, sir. Walker, my hat!" The Vice-Master handed him the cap reverentially, and, followed by his obsequious attendant, the Master stalked majestically away.

OF YOUTH AND AGE.

BY VERNON RENDALL.

THE title of Bacon's sonorous and well-balanced essay naturally occurs to a reader of an anthology concerning every year of man's life,† for we think of the beginning and the end of any business, not of the middle, where the solid work that justifies both is done. Mr. Sayle has shown great ingenuity and resource in fitting all his separate years with quotations, and even so only presents us with a selected show out of the store he has gathered for years. We notice many a passage which is apt, such as Johnson's verses on Mrs. Thrale at thirty-five, and Kent's hint of the wisdom of forty-eight in "King Lear". There is visible, too, a width of reference we expect from an accomplished bookman with learned friends. Still, the anthologist suggests that publication may bring him some happy quotations. It is the reviewer's privilege to grumble about anthologies, to correct a writer's taste by his own. De gustibus, as de ghostibus, non disputandum; still, we may add a reference or two of our own, and even descend to a few reflections on the remarkable age of to-day, though we are aware that these paper bullets of the brain will awe no man from the career of his humour.

The pretty age of six has a pretty bit of prose to match it, but no verse. Yet Wordsworth, in his great ode on Immortality and Recollections of Childhood, has pictured:

* "The allusion is no doubt to Joshua B-r-n-es, the present learned incumbent of the Greek Chair at Cambridge, whose recent edition of Homer has made a great stir in the world of letters. If we are not misinformed, there has been more than one passage of arms between him and Dr. B-nt-l-y, which may account for the asperity with which the doctor appears to treat his rival in the domain of scholarship. We hear that in private life Dr. B. ridicules the opinion of Professor B. that the 'Iliad' was written by King Solomon, and that he does not stick to assert that the professor choused his wife of her money by inducing her to sink it all in his 'putid' edition of Homer under the unalterable persuasion of the poet's personal identity with the Hebrew monarch. But into these peddling disputes of the learned we do not care to descend."—(Note to the M.S., apparently not intended for publication.—J. G. F.)

† "The Ages of Man: An Anthology Relating to Every Year of a Man's Life." By Charles Sayle. Murray. 7s. 6d. net.

"A six years' darling of a pigmy size".

At twice that age Bacon, the wonder of knowledge entered Trinity College, Cambridge. We are glad, however, not to be dazed by a crowd of infant prodigies, marvellous boys who seldom become marvellous men. A book on youth and age like this should deal preferably with the normal, and should encourage us with successes which endanger health and strength beyond all reason. Macaulay would supply us with a hint for the age of twelve, which Mr. Sayle connects with a detail of Spartan dress and a mortuary inscription. For Macaulay found Virgil's best passage in the Eighth Eclogue. There the lover tells of the dawning passion of his early years when, as a boy of twelve, he saw a little girl with her mother among the apples wet with dew, and guided them both, though he could but just reach the brittle branches from the ground. Macaulay provides here a singularly depressing quotation for eighteen—the shocking story of a youth hanged by Scottish judges as a reviler of the Supreme Being. Surely eighteen is a gay age, and carrying coals to Newcastle, we remind Mr. Sayle of the "A B C" penned by the deftest of Cambridge poets:

"A is an Angel of blushing eighteen;
B is the Ball where the Angel was seen;
C is her Chaperon, who cheated at cards;
D is the Deutemps, with Frank of the Guards;
E is her Eye, killing slowly but surely;
F is the Fan whence it peeped so demurely".

The passage has the advantage of being up to date with the two-step. When he comes to the twenties Mr. Sayle is well provided. We find Hood at twenty-one declaring:

"To put me on my solemn oath,
If, sweep-like, I could stop my growth,
I would remain, and nothing loth,
A boy—about nineteen".

The ambitious Milton proclaims Time a "subtle thief" at twenty-three, and William James talks of old fogeyism at twenty-five, that reluctance to attack new problems which makes mental acquisitions not so easy as they were. Lord Rosebery on his son at twenty-six is perfect, a model for orators. Since Mr. Sayle is rather fond of death dates, we rather wonder that he did not think of Keats at this period dying the master of some of the maturest and loveliest English in our literature. The period of Youth is extended here to forty, which seems somewhat of an oddity. Before forty, as Mr. Sayle tells us, Shakespeare had published "Hamlet", and it is an odd sort of youth, we may add, that includes the long range of Napoleon's great victories. Before forty he was the arbiter of Europe. After forty one year or another makes no great difference. Stevenson, writing to his mother on his birthday, explains:

"F. Bacon (Lord Chancellor) made the remark that 'Time was the greatest innovator'. It is, perhaps, as meaningless a remark as was ever made; but, as Bacon made it, I suppose it is better than any that I could make."

He goes on to say that ten years make a great difference. In a single year or two there is often no great or obvious change. "Singula prædantur anni," as wise old Horace said; there is no great loss or collapse in the slow process. You take more leisure and less trouble than you used to: the weather is not what it was when you were a boy, and that is all. The symptoms are slight. Youth runs across the taxi; the man is in it.

The sex who are said to include more readers than mere man can show might ask for more consideration in this anthology. Woman's devotion lasts on to any age. Romney, returning at sixty-four to the wife he had neglected for many a year, was received without rancour, even with rapture, and nursed for the rest of his life.

After all, what is a man's or a woman's age, though one period of life may seem to be in fashion for the moment rather than another? The general feeling is

neatly embodied in a passage Mr. Sayle must have longed to ascribe to a particular year, and so get into his pages:

"What, but a revolting fiction,
Seems the actual result
Of the Census's enquiries
Made upon the 15th ult.?
Still my soul is in its boyhood,
Nor of year or changes reckes,
Though my scalp is almost hairless,
And my figure grows convex."

Amateur photography, which hardly attains to justice, and has no mercy, may reveal wrinkles; hair may, by a freak of pigmentation, become prematurely white, or, in the famous saying of the Scottish editor, it may prefer death to dishonour, nothingness to a white feather. The student may think of

"Bonjour lunettes,
Adieu fillettes!"

which we render:

"When you take to glasses,
You may leave the lasses."

But all this means little. If we are short-sighted we have learnt not to take hopelessly long views. Johnson with one working eye saw more than most men do with two, and Tennyson, for all his short sight, was one of the closest observers. The Beauty Man who was Ouida's favourite type of our Army killed female reputations, not men. The exquisite who was recently reported to be in the habit of rising on his toes every morning and exclaiming: "I excel", has by this time, we trust, learnt a better way of proving his distinction. Youth is having the time and the chance of its life, and the best of our young men seized that chance in 1914. Stevenson thought it necessary to make an appeal for youth against age. To-day an essayist might think it justifiable to explain that age and experience are worth something, and that a young man just beginning the business of life cannot instruct all the grey heads concerning, say, Shakespeare, or tobacco, or the art of war. The new generation feels that it knows so much: Wisdom is sorry that it knows no more. True it is, as Goethe wrote in his casket of Oriental gems, that

"Youth is royal, youth divine;
Youth is drunkenness without wine";

but youth, in normal times, has little philosophy—the foolish laugh of twenty, as Balzac says, is enough—and is too self-centred to have a broad sense of humour. "The soul of sound good-fellowship" comes only with maturity. Youth expects perfection; the wiser mind has discovered, in default of archangels, how to love imperfect creatures. It has discovered, perhaps, too, its own limitations; it knows its own best occupation. Anthony Trollope at twenty-five was a disagreeable dullard. Mark Pattison mentions the fact only to accuse himself of a similar stupidity. Yet the cynic might reflect that a sense of one's own importance at any age is one of the best recipes for success, and for retaining it when it has been won. According to the delightful reminiscences of Locker-Lampson, the barmaid explained that "'Ealth, after personal appearance, is the greatest blessing as is". Those who are past the freaks of fashion need not worry at their variations on the figure of Apollo or Ouida's pet soldier. They can do good work, and the better, for forgetting themselves. They have no time to waste. At sixty they will know something about their subject, and may be removed by a set of grateful authorities as obsolete. At seventy or even eighty, if they have the constitution of Gladstone, a careful wife, a zeal for mastication, and an admirable sense of their own rectitude, they can still impose themselves, in some lines of business, on a more or less grateful country.

But they must not be shy at any period, formative, formed or uninformed. "I have lost a third of my life by shyness", said Jowett. This danger is one most incident to scholars; but the average man in our hustling age is not so subject to it. The fault we find in him is rather that, being deficient in education, he

has no fixed opinions, and sways up and down with each breath of rumour. Education need not begin, as it did for the unfortunate J. S. Mill, with Greek at three, but it should proceed as long as life lasts. William James was right: many a man makes no effort to improve himself when he has passed the years assigned to instruction. Afraid of being put down as a prig, he does not talk, as they did in the eighteenth century, of enlarging his understanding, and when he grows a white beard he can, with that venerable appendage, humbug people into the belief that he is a patriot or a prophet. We would not, however, put old age out of the reckoning as useless. It has "no crowded hour of glorious life"; but it has compensations which the young are apt to forget.

Jowett frequently proclaimed the last ten years of man's life the best, as the freest from care, freest from illusion, and fullest of experience. No one would wish

"to hang
Quite out of fashion, like a rusty nail
In monumental mockery";

but men have been gaily and trenchantly alive at well past seventy—indeed, full of an enterprise lacking in some wizened and crabbed soul of twenty-five. Others, again, who should have been learned have lived to great years a vegetable life, with nothing to distinguish them except a tap-rooted affection for the old soil and the old ways. Sophocles in serene old age makes another point: he was glad to be beyond the trials of love,

"for to be wise and love
Exceeds man's might; that dwells with gods above".

"Ripeness is all"; but to seek reputation, to gain notoriety—that seems a main end in many lives. Bacon, who wrote "Of Youth and Age", wrote also "Of Wisdom for a Man's Self": "An ant is a wise creature for itself, but it is a shrewd thing in an orchard or a garden. And certainly men that are great lovers of themselves waste the public". We recommend the remark to all self-seekers and self-advertisers, to those who prate out of season, to voluble professors of the "ipse dixit", and to expanding contractors who put their own pockets before King and country.

"One crowded hour of glorious life"—we were being taught by ingenious writers of fiction before the war that the real hero of to-day was the commercial magnate who made a fortune and beat down his adversaries in the money market. We have a better sort of hero now, whom all can recognise. But there are heroes and heroines of whom the world hears nothing, silent workers of all ages, on whose unhistoric acts the growing good of the world is more dependent than we know. Let us repeat the crowning words of a noble book:

"That things are not so ill with you and me as they might have been is half owing to the number who lived faithfully a hidden life, and rest in unvisited tombs".

THE ROAD.

THE Road is thronged with women: soldiers pass
And halt, but never see them: yet they're here,
A patient crowd along the sodden grass,
Silent, worn out with waiting, sick with fear.
The Road goes crawling up a long hill-side
All ruts and stones and sludge, and the emptied dregs
Of battle thrown in heaps: here, where they died,
Are stretched big-bellied horses with stiff legs;
And dead men, bloody-fingered from the fight,
Stare up at cavern'd darkness winking white.

You in the bomb-scorched kilt, poor sprawling Jock,
You tottered here and fell, and stumbled on,
Half-dazed for want of sleep: no dream could mock
Your reeling brain with comforts lost and gone.
You did not feel her arms about your knees,
Her blind caress, her lips upon your head:
Too tired for thoughts of home and love and ease,
The Road would serve you well enough for bed.

SIEGFRIED SASSOON, B.E.F.

CORRESPONDENCE.

OUR FRIEND AND ALLY ITALY.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—I have read with the greatest interest the letter on Lord Cromer and Italy in your issue of 25 November. Lord Cromer's declaration that he would never have joined the Serbian Society "if there had been the least intention of adopting an attitude hostile to Italy, and to her best interests, which, of course, include provision for her national security and for her predominance in the Adriatic", has gone very far to counteract the effects of a propaganda which had been conducted by a few extremists in this country and elsewhere in entire disregard of a principle essential to the existence of political alliances, that of the "best interests" of each partner of an alliance; when there is no actual conflict of interests, the country directly concerned is the only and best judge. That the British Government are actuated by precisely such a spirit in their dealings with Italy is a fact of which no Italian has ever doubted, and of which a striking confirmation has recently been given by Lord Robert Cecil. Speaking "in the name of the British Government" at the inaugural meeting of the British Italian League at the Mansion House on 24 November, Lord Robert Cecil said: "We recognise, and we are aware of, the national objects the Italian people have in view. We have had opportunities of ascertaining from authoritative sources exactly what those objects are. It is our purpose, if we can, to secure those objects for the Italians, and it is one of the main purposes of the Alliance to do so, and they need not be afraid that Great Britain will go back from her word in that respect."

It is not a secret to anybody, since Dr. Seton Watson's publication in the *English Review* of February last, that among the "national objects of the Italian people", to which Great Britain stands pledged by treaty, the first and foremost is such an asset of the Eastern shore of the Adriatic that, while providing for the legitimate interests both of the Serbian and the Croatian peoples, will give Italy the only guarantee of her national unity and her future security. Italians are particularly glad of Lord Robert Cecil's declaration, not because any of us ever doubted that Great Britain would ever go back from her word, but because it makes it now clear to those who advocate a different solution of the Adriatic problem that what they are doing is nothing less than asking Great Britain to go back from her word.

Yours, etc.,
RAFFAELLO PICCOLI, D.Litt.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

London,
30 November 1916.

SIR,—The letter from "A Lover of Italy" in your last issue requires rectification.

Your correspondent purports to summarise the aims of the Serbian Society of Great Britain from its prospectus, and quotes textually four out of five of those "aims". The fourth he describes as "To work for Southern Slav union for sentimental, political, economic, and strategic reasons". Why this economy of space in regard to the main feature of the Society's aims? Is it because a fair statement of "aim No. 4" would have rendered impossible the misrepresentations contained in the rest of "A Lover of Italy's" letter?

Allow me to make good the omission. Point No. 4 of the "aims" of the Serbian Society of Great Britain runs:—

"to work for Southern Slav union—

- (a) As an essential feature of the Allied policy of securing the rights and liberties of small peoples;
- (b) As a guarantee against future Germanic attempts to obtain political and economic mastery in Europe and the East; and
- (c) As the surest foundation of peace in the Adriatic and the Balkans."

I cannot conceive how the realisation of these "aims" should "jeopardise the maintenance of friendly relations between this country and Italy".

Your correspondent further seeks to establish a distinction between Serbians and Southern Slavs. But what are Serbians if not Southern Slavs? And what are Southern Slavs if not Serbs, Croats, and Slovenes living outside the former political boundaries of the kingdom of Serbia? The term "Southern Slav" has been officially adopted by the Prince Regent of Serbia. Any attempt to create an artificial distinction between Serbians and Southern Slavs is at once an anti-Serbian and anti-Southern Slav manoeuvre, and is so regarded by every Serbian of the kingdom. In the mind of the Serbian Society of Great Britain the terms "Serbian" and "Southern Slav" are interchangeable.

Your correspondent states that the Serbian Society is immediately akin to the Jugo-Slav Committee formed by political refugees from Austria-Hungary, and alleges that this relationship "was recognised by Lord Cromer, who knew that the aims of that Committee were diametrically opposed to the aims of Italy". Both statements are false. The Serbian Society is purely British. None but British subjects are eligible for membership. It stands for British ideals and interests. Chief among them is the establishment of lasting peace in Europe by a settlement based as nearly as possible upon the principle of nationality, and safeguarding the rights of small nations. I believe that these ideals and interests are also those of the great majority of the Italian people. With your correspondent's attempt to convict Lord Cromer of deliberate prevarication I prefer not to deal. When a public man of Lord Cromer's position and antecedents has publicly given his word, it ought not to be questioned without the most serious justification. He said in his speech at the Mansion House:—

"I want, on behalf of the Serbian Society, to give the most positive and emphatic denial to the idea that we are animated in any degree by hostility towards Italy and the Italians. . . . Let me say very distinctly, for my own part, that if I had the smallest suspicion that the Society was animated by any other feelings, or wished ill to Italy in any respect, I should have nothing to say at these proceedings. Moreover, I feel convinced that the sentiments which I have just uttered are shared by the other members of the Serbian Society."

To this statement every member of the Serbian Society would subscribe, as also to Lord Cromer's further declaration that "The Serbian Society has been formed, not with any idea of aspiring to the rôle, or thinking that England should aspire to the rôle, of being arbitrators between Serbs and Italians, but rather with a view to collecting the facts and laying them before the public, though we should welcome any occasion in which we might be of use towards smoothing over difficulties and bringing our two friends, the Slavs and Italians, together. That is our object."

No "Lover of Italy" is entitled to attribute to the Serbian Society other aims or objects than those which it has publicly professed, or to make it responsible for any programme or organisation other than its own. Its considered views upon the Adriatic question will be published in due course, after full and impartial investigation of all the facts by competent Englishmen and Englishwomen. Meanwhile, the Society claims a right to be judged as a British Society working for British ideals and interests, of which—as the resolution unanimously adopted at the inaugural meeting of the Society declared—a cordial agreement between Italians and Southern Slavs in the Adriatic is one of the foremost.

I am, yours faithfully,
H. WICKHAM STEED
(Acting Chairman of the Serbian Society).

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

29 November 1916.

SIR,—I should like to thank you for the publication of the letter by a "Lover of Italy". All the Italians left in this country have seen with deep regret the strange

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itude of a small section of the British Press towards Italy's vital, historical, geographical, national and strategical interests in the Adriatic.

We Italians have neither made any anti-propaganda nor oppose the notorious campaign led by Croat and Slovene agitators in this country, nor in any way intervened in order to sow discord between ourselves and our allies, both England and Serbia.

There is not a single Italian who does not hope that Serbia will be completely reinstated and enlarged. We are, however, anxious that our English and Serbian friends should be able to distinguish at last between our deep sympathy for the much-tried Serbian people and our mistrust of Croats and Slovenes, who, for all—it should be held in mind by everybody dissing the present and future relations between ourselves and the Serbians—are our bitterest enemies, and are fighting on the Austrian side of the trenches on the Carso. The latter have been, and still are, the tools of the Habsburgs against us and the Serbians. The best proof of this is that they get constant praise from the Austrian General Headquarters for their bravery against us, just as they got it some months ago for fighting against the Russians and the Serbians.

The notorious anti-Italian propaganda which has gone on in this country during the last two years has been advantage (1) of Italy's neutrality; (2) of Italy's necessary delay in declaring war on Germany.

The Italians expect now that their English allies and friends should realise at last who are the authors of the intrigues which have been and are still carried on in this country. These are affording a special reason for satisfaction to the German and Austrian Press.

Yours faithfully,
AN ITALIAN FRIEND OF ENGLAND.

THE NEED FOR MORE MEN.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Chelsea,

November 1916.

SIR,—I have been told that Sir William Robertson's straightforward and common-sense speeches are pessimistic and discouraging, but they are exactly the opposite. It is true, as he says, that the country is not fully awake, though it is becoming more and more every day. It is true that, unless we make every possible effort, we and our allies will not secure that complete victory or effect the crushing of German power which is necessary to restore lasting peace and prosperity to the world.

What we need is to hit the enemy hard and with all our might, and for this we require more and more men, who must be supplied to Sir Douglas Haig.

Give him the men, and victory is certain. Nothing else is wanting.

It is useless now to talk about the hideous blunder which the late Government made in not introducing conscription directly we declared war against Germany, a nation in arms which carefully prepared for war with us for over a generation—that is, ever since the Kaiser came to the throne. Had the Government possessed the courage to do that which they were forced by public opinion and the exigencies of the situation to carry out a year later, viz., to introduce conscription and call all young men of nineteen to the Colours, increasing the age limit as more men were wanted, there would have been none of this dislocation of business in the country which has been caused by calling men of mature ages, married, and settled in business. This state of things cannot now be helped. There is, however, one source of man-power which it is the height of stupidity not to tap.

There are enormous numbers of coloured subjects of the Empire, who, we believe, are eager to serve. It is an insult to them not to accept the services which they bravely and loyally offered us. The most uncultured of them would not display the brutal ferocity shown by the Germans in this war, who have shown themselves to be far worse and lower savages than the most civilised race in the King's Dominions.

Our negroes are brave and splendid fighters, and far superior to the Germans at close quarters. The French largely employ black soldiers, so do we in the Soudan, and it passes the wit of man to discover why we are so squeamish and tender to the Germans, who are never tired of saying how they mean to crush and destroy us, and to treat our people to the crimes and horrors which they have wrought in every country that has been defiled by their presence.

If our Government possess common sense, courage, and foresight, they will order corps of coloured soldiers to be formed and prepared through the winter, so that when the spring comes, and with it warmer weather, they will be ready to take a very effectual part in the war.

Your obedient servant,
ALFRED E. TURNER.

LORD HALDANE AND HIS RECORD.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—'Tis too much proved that with devotion's visage and pious action we do sugar o'er the devil himself; so, although to some of your correspondents it seems sweet and commendable to do obsequious sorrow to Lord Haldane's defunct political reputation, I hope you have a few readers who regard obstinate condolence in such a course as a fault to heaven.

Are we to crook the pregnant hinges of the knee to the chief of the band that scoffed and jeered at Lord Roberts's solemn exhortation—because, perhaps, after all he did not reduce our artillery?

Are we to grapple to our soul with hoops of steel the sciolist who taught an ease-loving proletariat that compulsory service in the nation's cause is an amateur's dream—because he improved the Volunteers?

Are we, above all, are we ever to forget the clear-thinking shepherd of the people who expressly desired to be remembered—if honoured with remembrance at all—as one who had helped to bury conscription in a very deep grave? This last commandment all alone shall live, unmixed with any other trivial fond records.

Your obedient servant,
A. ALCOCK, Lieut.-Col., I.M.S.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Temple,

29 November 1916.

SIR,—Sir Alfred Turner's perfervid appreciation of Lord Haldane and all his works at the War Office in your issue of 18 November calls for a reply.

Sir Alfred Turner tells us that Lord Haldane added many units of various arms to the British Forces during his tenure of the office of Secretary of State for War. This, I contend, is one of the chief indictments against him, for, by adding units *on paper*, he lulled the public into a sense of false security, giving them the impression that the personnel of the Army was being increased thereby; the real (but carefully concealed) fact being that few, if any, units were up to anything like their full strength, either in men or horses, and that the fresh units were only being constituted by a further weakening of already weak existing units.

Let Sir Alfred Turner, who writes "as one having authority", rather tell us by how many men, horses, and guns Lord Haldane increased the Army while Secretary for War. It may be said that since Lord Haldane did not anticipate aggression on the part of Germany he had no reason to strengthen the British Army. Lord Haldane himself would hardly dispute the proposition of law that a person holding himself out to do certain work implicitly warrants his possession of skill reasonably competent for its performance, and that a skilled performer being employed on the ground of his possession of unusual and special skill is undoubtedly bound to bring to bear a greater degree of skill than the ordinary expert. He becomes bound

to a performance measured by the consummate skill attributed to him.

Now, Lord Haldane certainly "held himself out" as having a special degree of knowledge based upon long experience in all matters relating to Germany and to thought and feeling in that country during the years preceding 1914, and was accordingly trusted and believed in by other members of the Government "on the ground of his possession of unusual and special skill" in those matters. He therefore became bound to a performance measured by the consummate skill attributed to him. Did he show such consummate skill? If the answer to that question is in the affirmative, and he knew that Germany was preparing for war on a gigantic scale, his plain duty was to warn his colleagues in the Cabinet, and to resign if his warnings were neglected.

If, on the other hand, the answer is in the negative, then it becomes clear that he was deceived by his friends in Germany into thinking that country friendly in its intentions towards us, in which case it can hardly be said that he showed such consummate skill as to render his continued presence at the War Office proper or desirable.

Does Sir Alfred Turner class Lord Haldane with the learned University Dons, who are "as children" concerning the wicked ways of the world in general and of the Kaiser in particular, or does he prefer to class him with those, of whom another late member of the present Cabinet is so shining an example, who, realising to the full the critical nature of the situation, deliberately chose to shut their eyes to its gravity and "hope for the best"? It appears to have become the custom to belaud ad nauseam Ministers who have retired from the Cabinet, but is not such a custom "more honoured in the breach than in the observance"?

I am not concerned to discuss the question whether Lord Haldane is, or is not, more pro-German than Sir Alfred Turner, or at all. Sir Alfred Turner pleads for justice for Lord Haldane. By all means let him have justice, and let him be judged by his works. Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.

Yours, etc.,

DEEDS.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

SIR,—General Sir Alfred Turner's apologia for Lord Haldane will not convince those whose common sense and patriotism enabled them to foresee Germany's intentions, and who distrust Lord Haldane as one who ought to have known, and did know, our imminent and terrible danger, and yet said no word to warn the nation. On the contrary, he has not been ashamed to taunt the people with their want of reflection and refusal to hear those who preached—he, the very man who reviled Lord Roberts for preaching, and spoke of him as an amateur in matters of war organisation and blind to the point of view of the seaman and statesman. As Shakespeare says in a play full of lessons for our age, he "beat the messenger that bid beware of what is to be dreaded". He kept asserting that there would be no war, that no one, least of all Germany, wanted war, that the English and Germans were growing more and more alike (heaven forbid!), and that he rejoiced to see Germany penetrating everywhere to the profit of mankind (what will the Belgians, French, Poles, and Serbians have to say to this?), and that in naval and military defence we were absolutely and completely equipped to meet all emergencies and situations, and that the person who denied this was in a blue funk.

Such is the modest claim made, and we are told to thank the gods for such a War Minister. But do the facts bear out the boast or the praise? Let it be granted that Lord Haldane made some good and necessary reforms, such as the setting up of a General Staff, the organisation of the Territorials, and the establishment of a very small picked force fully equipped (such at least was the claim). But in doing so much he wiped out the historic and useful Militia, and declared that the first essential towards getting a satis-

factory army was to cut off some of the Regulars, rather boasted of sacrificing nine fine battalions because they were more than he could mobilise. Why? We know what King Edward thought of this. Speaking to the 3rd Bn. Scots Guards, he said: "My Government [a very unusual formula] has considered it necessary to reduce the expenses of the Army, in consequence of which there will be a reduction both of our artillery and infantry." We are now told with some heat that Lord Haldane increased the artillery. By abolishing the Militia and reducing the Regulars he was able to produce an immediate Special Reserve.

As for the Territorials, as one of his own colleagues said, their success was a pure gamble, but though their numbers were never full and latterly fell off lamentably, such success as they attained was due to the War Minister's political opponents—viz., the National Service League, the "Daily Mail", and influential Peers. That they had time to be of any use against Continental armies was due to our enormous and wholly undeserved luck of having such Allies as Russia and France to withstand the first blow of attack.

The gallantry of our expeditionary force has been due to Lord Haldane's credit, but the excellence of those troops was not due to him, but to the Boer War and the hard work of the officers since. On the other hand, instead of the 150,000 or more men completely equipped which we had promised could be landed in a week on the Continent, we had at the most seventy-five thousand men in the firing line in three weeks. Another 50,000 men would have been of incalculable value, saved many prisoners and lives. Moreover, Sir Robert Borden, who knows, has publicly asserted that this (though by no means contemptible) army was ill-equipped, badly armed as regards artillery, and altogether in every respect a disgrace to the authorities. Well, well, what are we to believe? It is certain that in the matter of aeroplanes, machine-guns, and heavy artillery and munitions, we were scandalously ill-provided. It was weeks—the Government will not tell us exactly how many—before we had a full complement of 160,000 men on French soil. It was months before the Territorials were available.

So after all Lord Haldane's achievements really do not seem to loom so very large. Most of what was good in his reforms was copied from his beloved Germans, but more than anyone else, prevented our adopting the essential reform—namely, General Service. He said it was a mere dream and boasted of having buried it in a deep grave (fortunately not deep enough), adding that England would have to be invaded once or twice before being induced to adopt it.

Let it not be forgotten, too, that he neglected to make any reserve supplies of guns or ammunition, or provide for the training of the new officers that a Continental war would require. He also dismissed numbers of skilled workmen from our arsenals, so that hundreds of experienced workers who were masters of our latest improvements and naval and military secrets migrated, it is said were even encouraged to migrate to Germany, where they were received with open arms and wages of from £5 to £10 a week. Lastly, it is widely believed that he held up our mobilisation in the fateful days of August 1914.

These being the facts, as far as they are known to the outside public, why should we—"ranting imbeciles" is the "Spectator's" courteous description of us—be expected to praise or believe in a man who while doing some good has done a great deal more harm to his country, and has shown his pro-German sympathies so decidedly as to make a suspicion of his loyalty quite justifiable. When his colleagues and Party reviled the Army and its officers, and were on the point of adopting as an election cry "Army versus People" he raised no voice against this attitude. Why should we forget that he and his admirers, by their wilful blindness and deliberate hoodwinking of the people, brought this country to the very brink of ruin?

Opposite this verse of Ezekiel (xxxiii. 6): "If the water can see the sword come and blow not the trumpet, and the

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people be not warned; if the sword come and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity, but his blood will I require at the watchman's hand", I wrote in 1910: "So it is with England now: the sword of the German is drawn".

Yours, etc.,
C. R. HAINES.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

94, Park Street,
Grosvenor Square, W.

SIR,—Sir Alfred Turner has presented the case for Lord Haldane very well, and very impartially, but he has entirely missed the point so far as the judgment of the country is concerned. The gravamen and chief complaint against Lord Haldane are that as Secretary of State for War he allowed himself to be hypnotised by the Kaiser, and thus kept in mental subjection at a time when he should have sharpened his wits to the utmost, kept his eyes and ears wide open in Berlin, and his mouth open in Downing Street. Lord Haldane has himself confessed that he was uneasy, and made feeble efforts to wake himself and his colleagues, but to no purpose. Mr. Churchill considers the Liberal Cabinet to contain the quintessence of wisdom in the shape of eminent men, who were once in a while caught napping, while some very foolish men happened to have their eyes open to what was going on in Germany. The verdict of history will be different. The most democratic Government this country ever had will be pronounced to have been an utter failure in the art of ruling the affairs of a great Empire. The outstanding feature of the period that immediately preceded the great war will be acknowledged to be the prophetic insight of Lord Roberts, who devoted the declining years of a noble life to the futile effort to rouse the Government to the coming danger. Lord Haldane boasted that he knew Germany well, and went out of his way to extol what he was pleased to style his "spiritual home". Yet he was spiritually blind and deaf to the real Germany which was all the time preparing the most terrible war this planet has witnessed. Mr. Churchill may consider himself and Lord Haldane as very wise men indeed, but whether Wisdom would be inclined to rank them among her children is quite another story.

Yours, etc.,
ARTHUR LOVELL.

THE SOLDIER'S GLASS OF BEER.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Monreith.

SIR,—Mr. Osborne Aldis does not strengthen his advocacy of John Barleycorn by the introduction of a wholly arbitrary and, as I hold, impossible etymology for Winchester. He would have us accept "vinum castra" as the derivation. Leaving aside the anomaly of a place-name being compounded of a nominative singular and a nominative plural, how can such guesswork be brought in accord with the Latin name for this important station—Venta Belgarum? The interpretation usually accepted is probably right—viz., the Welsh "gwent"; a hollow, which accords well with the position of the town below St. Catherine's Hill. Bede, writing in the seventh century, gives us the form which the name assumed in Anglo-Saxon speech—Vintanceaster.

Wine of a sort may have been made here and there in the south of England, but not before the Roman occupation, or it would assuredly have been mentioned by Cæsar, Tacitus, and other writers.

I am, Sir,
Your obedient servant,
HERBERT MAXWELL.

*. By an error Sir Herbert Maxwell's letter was left out of Correspondence last week, though his name was included in the Table of Contents.

THE CASE AGAINST GERMAN MUSIC.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

23 November 1916.

SIR,—Your correspondent, R. Wynyard, in your issue of the 18th inst., refers to the "thunderous applause" which greeted Mr. Mark Hambourg at the Coliseum one afternoon recently—this presumably in support of the contention that Britons are musical.

Unfortunately Mr. Wynyard goes on to state that he left to catch his train before the encore. Does it not occur to your correspondent that if he were really musical, and not merely emotional, he would entirely have forgotten his train and thought only of the further delights in store?

I am, yours truly,
H. S. RUSSELL.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Oxford Street, Manchester,

27 November 1916.

SIR,—I have read with much amusement the opinions of Mr. Holbrooke and others on the position of music by native composers. Mr. Holbrooke recently spoke of the rich men who should come forward and pay. Surely he has no faith in them? You surely have the rich man in Sir Thomas Beecham; would anyone pretend that the activities of a rich man in music benefit music here? Personally I think their activities are to please themselves; they have no wild desire to hunt out genius. It will be the same with Mr. Carnegie, without doubt. These rich men have no judgment. In my country (America) rich men swarm, but they do no good in art—unless they buy, and then very little. No, sir; such men have one interest when they spend money on music, and that interest is themselves: quite naturally.

Britain should have Government orchestras.

Yours, etc.,
A. J. HILL.

REPENTANCE.

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

13 November 1916.

SIR,—Your correspondent, W. R. W., should not properly have troubled himself to write his long and ardent letter in opposition to the National Mission, since the call to repentance and hope is addressed to professed Christians, and, without offence, I gather from his sixth and thirteenth paragraphs that he is none. He would himself, I am sure, freely admit that the subject of repentance—though the subject of his letter—is one with which he is not intimately acquainted; that whether there is any joy or profit in repentance he cannot say from experience. Neither his opinions, nor his consequent want of acquaintance with a distinctively Christian idea, can be a matter of reproach to him; but they might have been a reason for forbearing to instruct Christian bishops in their duty.

Though it must be a strangely constituted mind which could sit down in modern England and say she is perfect, with nothing to regret or amend; though the fact that she is fighting in a righteous quarrel does not make us all saints; though we, who live in the Middle Temple or elsewhere, have no right to lay claim to the virtues of our soldiers, and, because their souls have shown themselves glorious, to assume that ours are glorious too; though, if this war is one of light against darkness, their heroism may be said in a degree to be wasted if darkness is vanquished abroad and left to dwell undisturbed at home; though all this is true, those were not the reasons, I believe, which inspired the Bishop of London to set on foot this mission. The leaders of the Church, seeing that it was a time when men were doing and feeling nobly, when they were roused to love all that was lofty, splendid and spiritual, and to disdain and reject all that was base, sordid, and material, thought it a heaven-sent moment in which to point them to still loftier heights whither that glorious tide might carry them, and as they

had learnt to love the god-like in man, to direct them onward to its source in God. And those who dreamed of such an end were no doubt amazed to find that their flock was strayed so far as to have forgotten that as that way is narrow, so is the gate thereof low.

It is not because we are in more need than usual of repentance, but because repentance is the only spirit in which a Christian dares or wishes to approach his God, that the mission calls to repentance before hope.

Repentance was understood formerly. Anciently it was said of God: "I dwell in the high and holy place, with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit." You recollect, sir, Cowley's lines upon a dead friend, whose beautiful character would seem to have had no need for contrition:—

"Still with his soul severe account he kept,
Weeping all debts out ere he slept.
Then down in peace and innocence he lay."

Could this be a description of any one of us? And would it not be well if it could? And who, that thinks upon the subject, would not think with the widowed mother, christening Sir Richard Hawkins's ship (strangely, as men thought) the "Repentance", that "Repentance is a good ship to sail to the harbour of heaven"?

If this does not seem reasonable, blame the Founder of Christianity, who taught us to pray for forgiveness and for mercy; but do not blame Christian teachers for acting according to their vows.

From the very beginning of the war, writers, presumably churchmen, in the newspapers complained that the Church had not risen to the height of the occasion, and given the nation a lead. The lead is now given, and where is the enthusiasm to follow? It was not a lead the nation wanted, but that the Church should follow with a loud noise in whatever way her flock chose to go. Your correspondent, not being a churchman, is not open to the reproach of holding himself wiser than his own leaders. But he has a fair opportunity of studying principles unlike his own. If Christianity can teach a man largely and charitably to construe the motives of others, and not to condemn as "seeking the limelight" those who preach a creed that is not his, it is by so much better than the religion of the Middle Temple.

Yours faithfully,
B. CHAMIER.

"DRABNESS."

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW.

Praia de Lavadores, Portugal,
29 October 1916.

SIR,—On more than one occasion the SATURDAY REVIEW has published letters on the use in public of uncommon words such as "dour", "emergent", "dispeace", and "orgulous". The following sentences occur in the "Morning Post" of 25 April and the "Daily Mail" of 23 October respectively: "When the first session of the Independent Labour Party Conference opened here this morning it did so in an atmosphere of quietude rather suggestive of an arranged programme, and the *drabness* was consistently maintained throughout the morning". "People who tell only of the grim, *drab* aspect of this great war sometimes forget that romances just as fine as were ever spun by Victor Hugo happen around them every day". I cannot find in any dictionary the meaning here given to "drabness" and "drab". Is there any authority for these words besides your two said contemporaries?

Your obedient servant,
(Professor) AL. M. CRICKS.

We are obliged to hold over many letters this week.

REVIEWS.

THE RUSSIAN DE MAUPASSANT.

"The Tales of Tchekhov." Vol. I.: *The Darling*; and other Stories. Vol. II.: *The Duel*; and other Stories. Chatto and Windus. 2s. each.

WE welcome the appearance of these well-produced volumes of the work of the great Russian novelist, Tchekhov. Translated by Mrs. Edward Garnett, they preserve the peculiar tang that distinguishes all Russian literature. In all great Russian writers may be detected, with an unusual sincerity and outspokenness of expression, a note of sadness, of regret, of a fatality that will not be denied—"Old in grief and very wise in tears". It has been said that, in spite of its being the youngest of all the literatures, it seems to be spiritually the oldest. In some respects it seems to have become over-ripe before it reached maturity. But herein, perhaps, as Mr. Maurice Baring has said, lies the secret of its greatness, and this may be the value of its contribution to the soul of mankind.

Tchekhov is a master of the short story. He is singularly free from the defects of many Russian novelists. He has none of the garrulity that make some of them, notably such writers as Turgenieff and Dostoevsky, sometimes monotonous to read. He has a keen sense of form. His language is clear and concise. His effects, which are clean-cut and vivid, are produced with the utmost economy of language. He is absolutely direct. Some of his most telling tales do not run to more than ten or twelve small pages of type.

A realist of realists, he vivisections men and women, deftly exposing their quivering sensibilities and multi-form maladies. But he performs the operation in no savage spirit. He is not cold-blooded about it, but warmly human, sympathetic indeed, and understanding. But he will have truth at any cost, and he brushes aside everything that stands in the way of his vision. He is a surgeon who believes in the knife, and has no use for palliatives, but will go direct and cut deep, if need be, to get at the root of the trouble.

The stories that make up these volumes are brief studies—little cameos—of men and women, of varying temperaments, moods, and emotions. Some of them are squalid and depressing. Most of them are drab or grey. Tchekhov, like so many other Russian writers, does not regard life as a highly-coloured gift, eminently desirable for its own sake, but rather as a thing to be patiently accepted and endured because we have it. He seems ever conscious of a lurking destiny ironically playing "cat and mouse with people's happiness", and he watches the struggles and the strivings of the victims in the meshes with undisguised interest blended with a certain grave pity. If he is blind to life's glamour and beauty, to its extenuating circumstances, he is keenly alert to detect its intricacies, its possibilities for pain and misunderstanding. It is as though the world were a hospital of sick and wounded. But although his note is melancholy, Tchekhov is not without humour. If he were, his stories would be unbearable. His humour is not of the broad, obvious kind, but consists rather in little gentle, homely touches, little turns of expression sometimes that lighten up the gloom. In his treatment of women he exhibits often a mordant humour and cynicism that are absent from his studies of men. What can be more biting than his character of "The Princess"—the woman who thought herself beloved by everybody, who posed as, and believed herself, an angel, and whose soul he pitilessly lays bare as a thing of egotism and utter selfishness? And "The Darling", who must have someone to love and who takes her opinions, her colour, chameleon-like, from each man in succession with whom she consorts. What a contemptuous view of the sex it reveals! And the same idea is repeated in other stories, such as "Ariadne" and "The Helpmate". Tchekhov's men resent and question the fact of sex. "Can it be that I, a cultivated man, endowed with a complex spiritual organisation, ought to explain the intense attraction I feel towards a woman simply

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by the fact that her bodily formation is different from mine? . . .” And, again: “. . . it is better to suffer than to find complacency on the basis of woman being woman and man being man”.

But when the sense of sex is absent he can show a rare tenderness towards women, as in the exquisite little sketch of the little old lady in “The Trousseau”.

Our final impression is one of the fertility of brain of the writer, and the astounding variety of phases of character and emotions with which he deals. We have few, if any, short story writers in English who can compare with Tchekov in range, and none to equal him in grip and power. His stories bite into the memory.

A MAGICIAN OF MALAYA.

“The Magic of Malaya.” By Cuthbert Woodville Harrison. John Lane. 3s. 6d. net.

[REVIEWED BY BISHOP FRODSHAM.]

THERE is some magic in Malaya that speeds the pen of those who write of that beautiful land and of the sepia-coloured folk who dwell therein. It might be too much to claim for Mr. Harrison a place in literature equal to Sir Hugh Clifford or Sir Frank Swettenham. But his book possesses real charm and power. It is the work of a man who knows well the tortuous twists of thought and action of the real Malay. Being so, he can make his readers look through his eyes fascinated, and forgetful for a while of the fog and fret of London streets. If Mr. Harrison is not a master magician in Malaya, without doubt he is a fellow craftsman.

There is one kind of magic in which the Malays themselves believe implicitly, and at which only those white men laugh who know least about it. The first and most dramatic story Mr. Harrison tells is about the murder of a Chinese trader by Pawang Helai, Helai the Magician. And yet was it murder? The answer depends entirely upon the view taken of the events succeeding the passionate fury of a tropical storm. All unconscious of the crouching uncouth form of Helai and of that graceful animal his son, “Li Wang sat shuddering in the boat, waiting for the rain to pass and wondering if the storm would raise the river on him. As he sat, there struck suddenly upon his listless ear a gentle rumbling sound, not unlike the purring of a monstrous cat. The jungle is full of noises and the Chinese mind is void of imagination, so Li Wang took no notice. But a sudden rise in the note of the sound, changing it into a snarl close at hand, forced his attention, and with a quick movement he looked up to the bank above him. He saw nothing, for so thick was the blackness of the night that objects close at hand were invisible, except when the sheet lightning illumined the scene. The snarl continued, to the dismay of Li Wang, who vaguely thought at last, as a quicker witted, more timorous, or less Chinese mind had thought long before, of tigers. When there smote upon his nostrils a charnel-house smell, a stench of decay and rotteness, he *knew* that within a few feet of him was a tiger.” It is difficult to make those who have only read of frightful-death realise from the printed word that the first instinct in a hunted man is to do something, anything, everything but exercise self-control. Li Wang “sprang to cast off his rope. As he did so a sheet of electric fire lit up the bank, and upon it, close to him, he saw the square under-jaw, the white throat, the muzzle, and the savage eyes of a tiger. The fierce reality at hand upset his balance; he pitched headlong into the river, and from that moment no man saw him more. With a self-satisfied chuckle Pawang Helai shook himself back from the likeness of a tiger to the likeness of a man.” The dénouement is doubted only by those who sit at home and dogmatise empirically upon what is possible and what is impossible. Those who know Malaya are in no doubt as to the main fact, although they may halt ’twixt two opinions as to the explanation of the fact. The brown man will be satisfied that Helai took the tiger shape because he was a magician. The white

man believes that Helai meant to appear as a tiger, and that Li Wang believed he saw a tiger. The white man may talk about hypnotic illusions or frankly lay all down to the devil’s powers; but he knows there is something in the tiger-man. But what? That is the question. There is not a little sardonic appreciation of the humour of the situation in Pawang Helai’s own remark: “This foolish person, being in haste, fell into the river, and is gone to trade with the fish, leaving his gear and goods behind”.

The belief that those who eat the food of the dead become as the dead is widespread. It is in the treatment of the belief that the magic of Mr. Harrison appears. Mat Palembang, a coolie on a coffee estate, was found one day at the foot of a kompas tree with a broken thigh and a bloody head. His father, who three years before “returned to meet the infinite mercies of Allah”, had accosted him in the jungle and walked and talked with him. Later they had been joined by his brother, whom a conscientious crocodile had seized “very gently” and laid in a “holt deep down below the bank of the river”, to die of drowning; and then by his sister, Haji Nor’s wife, who “died in childbirth”. Together they had ascended into a great tree, wherein was a company of the dead who had died by violence. The terrified Mat Palembang watched the company change in an horrific fashion before his very eyes. On his refusing to eat of the feast prepared they seized him with one accord and pushed him screaming from the branches. “Falling”, he said, “I saw them gibber from the tree-top, mouthing and cursing at me, and I struck the ground, lying as one dead.”

Beri-beri is a tropical disease which, if it were found in England, might be diagnosed as a specific form of multiple peripheral neuritis. I was once a fellow-passenger in a tiny ketch with a Malay suffering from this disease. We treated him by the light of Nature, feeding him plentifully upon onions, our only fresh vegetable, and—he subsequently recovered. The treatment was more scientific than the one Mr. Harrison describes, which consisted in teaching the patients to use again their wandering feet. But his description of the beri-beri walk is excellently accurate. It is “something between the way in which a duck swings its feet and a hen lifts up her toes”. Who, too, that has watched, not always with philosophical patience, let it be allowed, bullocks and their masters can doubt the vivid accuracy of this description of the latter when, standing leaning on their poles, they “lose themselves in an ecstasy of stupidity”? There is something fine, too, albeit exasperating to the white man, in the attitude of mind of the Malay driver who refuses for any filthy lucre to drive his bullocks more than two miles an hour, or to make the same journey twice a day. He has his own theory of life, which is something like this soliloquy: “One journey and I make twenty dollars a month. Two journeys and I make thirty. Difference, ten dollars. What use have I for ten dollars? What became of the last ten? Supposing I were rich beyond the dreams of avarice, how am I profited? I was born in my kampong; I shall die there. I have upkept it, as my father did. He planted fifteen coconuts. So have I.” “Content with so little!” says the white man. “How much happier he would be if he were discontented!” But, after all, the thing that matters is that the bullock driver does not think so too.

Some readers of the SATURDAY REVIEW have been in at the death of an alligator or a shark. Those who have not are unable to understand the fierce joy with which the cruel slaughter of a captive animal can be welcomed, nor the morbid curiosity with which his autopsy may be conducted. Mr. Harrison, as usual, writes vividly and with grim humour of the death of a crocodile, and of bringing to the light of day, from the interior of the saurian, “a handful of bones and, horror of it all, white shining teeth”. The crowd cried: “Certainly these are the bones and teeth of Dolah. Let them be collected.” The Chinese operator “smiled inscrutably, yet with a superior air, and he continued to hold the bones and teeth in his hand. At last, forced by insistent clamour into action,

he rose from his knees and said: 'These be not bones of man, but pigs' bones'. With an open and a natural incredulity the crowd howled at him that he knew nothing of such things, and it took some time to get the man a hearing, when, with a strong insistence, a final clinching of his former statement, he said simply: 'Am I not a pig-slaughterer by trade?' Then we were convinced."

Concerning the Chinese immigrants in Malaya, Mr. Harrison writes with equal knowledge and understanding. The business habits of the ill-fated Li Wang, the agricultural projects of Ah Heng and his resourceful wife, the machinations of the tin stealers in the mountain ranges, and the wild delirium of a fight with them in a storm, are all told with vigour and with intimate knowledge. In short, this book is one that encourages the hope that the author will write more—much more—both of the Malays and of the strangers who dwell in their land.

TWO WAR HEROINES.

"The Cellar-House of Pervyse: A Tale of Uncommon Things from the Journals and Letters of the Baroness T'Serclaes and Mairi Chisholm." Black. 6s. net.

IN March 1915 a decree was passed by the Allied Armies at Paris that no women should be allowed in the firing-line—with two exceptions, mentioned by name. These exceptions are the heroines of this remarkable book. Pervyse lies half-way between Nieuport and Dixmude, on the Belgian front. Baroness T'Serclaes has explained how she and her companion went there. She found that far too many of the severely wounded were dead when they arrived at the base hospital. She thought that by treating them at once she could save life. After several refusals she and her companion, both young women, were allowed to work as they proposed for twenty-four hours. They stayed in the firing-line for nearly two years; they proved abundantly the success of their work; they received the Belgian Order of the Knight's Cross from King Albert, and gratitude and reverence from all who knew them. They have never sought publicity, and their letters and journals are published in the hope of creating a wider interest in wounded Belgian soldiers than their personal appeal can reach. The letters and journals have been put together by Miss G. E. Mitton, and they reveal as fine an example of fortitude and devotion as the war has produced. The heroines lived at first in a cellar twelve feet by ten, slept on straw, drank foul water from a ditch, and were incessantly under shell fire. They sacrificed their hair; they had no possibility of changing clothes at night—indeed, they were often called up to attend to desperate cases. Three times they were shelled out and left without a roof over their heads, and their passing through such an experience without injury is one of the wonders of their record. These young women daily faced appalling risks and went on steadily with their work, never grumbling about difficulties or disappointments. As one of them notes in the little fat, mud-stained journals Miss Mitton has used:

"It requires nerve to drive an ambulance steadily under fire, but to sit still doing nothing with the shells bursting around takes it out of you worst of all."

The record is a triumph of devotion and of uncommon personality. If our Army is indomitable and indomitably cheerful, so are these nurses. That efficiency, too, which some prate of as if it was monopolised by the Germans was theirs. The Baroness—a love story gives her that title at the end of the book—was a fully-trained nurse, an excellent mechanic and chauffeur, and she spoke French and German. Her friend had no training as a nurse, and was but eighteen, but she was a motor-cyclist and, later, drove a car the 160 miles from Boulogne to Pervyse. She sold her cycle to pay for her expenses, and showed at work all the capability and steady sense which belongs to the best type of Scotchwoman. The two got to business early, and before they reached Pervyse carried a heavy man on a stretcher, themselves bending nearly

double to get their heads below the level of a river trench, in the dark under heavy fire. At Melle, under fire the whole afternoon, the Scotch girl lost none of her coolness. Her diary merely says:

"It was most interesting; the shrapnel was screaming overhead the whole time—a most fascinating sound."

Another day the two took five German prisoners eight miles in a car, without any man to protect them. They had a nerve which male chauffeurs could not always command. Driving in the darkness, with numerous shell-holes ahead as well as shells above, was no joke.

Only a keen sense of humour could have carried the two through such a life of wearing work and perpetual horrors. Both possessed it. One writes:

"An officer shot eight sparrows, which he gave us, and I started in and plucked the little jossers. Quite a job!"

The other remarks about the visits they had from prominent people:

"There never is a wounded man here when these great folks arrive. I think I shall have to get a tame *bléssé* and keep him permanently bandaged on a stretcher on the floor, and when I see them coming get busy and look interesting with hot chocolate and bandages."

Miss Mitton makes a fluent narrative of the story, but she rather sentimentalises it, and makes people "materialise", which is not one of the attractive idioms of journalism. The photographs give a good idea of the scene of desolation amid which the heroic pair worked, and of types of Belgian soldiers.

THE BOYS UPON THE SOMME.

"Somme Battle Stories." Recorded by Capt. A. J. Dawson. Illustrated by Capt. Bruce Bairnsfather. Hodder & Stoughton. 2s. 6d. net.

NOVELIST and journalist, familiar with Canada and Australia (whither he went and built a house for himself before the war), a sailor in early days, and recently a soldier of the trenches, Captain Dawson is the very man, by his unusually wide sympathies and experience, to win from our modest heroes some idea of what they have done and record the spirit in which they return home. He has, too, a special right to bring these cheery messages of confidence before the public, for he has not, like some penmen, a sharp turn to make from his pre-war opinions. He was one of the very few writers who clearly saw the German menace, and pictured it in a book of striking quality. The art of learning the deeds of our splendid soldiers is clearly not easy; but Captain Dawson has lured them into confidences. They are not men who, like some of our public performers, turn with zest to the business of throwing bouquets at themselves. Rather, one learns from one man what another has done. Reaching Southampton, they are buoyed up with thoughts of home, but they are home because they are disabled, often severely wounded, and this makes the record of their gay courage and splendid spirit all the more remarkable. Reading these vivacious narratives—there is no need to improve them, and Captain Dawson is far too much of an artist to take liberties in that way—one realises why Sir William Robertson goes to the front when he wants a tonic. The informal remarks and letters of officers tell us what the spirit of our New Army is, and how great is the gain in moral over the German, whose invincible positions are being steadily mastered. The more fragmentary remarks—the true Englishman is always a little incoherent—are even more convincing, for one can easily read between the lines, and it is a relief to have a real war-book which does not use up Armageddon. The soldier's language is less elaborate. Hear the Cockney, who has a readier gift of speech than his fellows, and would cheek Nemesis herself to her face. He enjoys the terrible trials of Delville Wood:

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think there wuz something *wrong* abaht the min' plice. Fer me, I like the in-an'-aht close I do; better'n this bloomin' extended order work open, wiv the bloomin' typewriters clack-clackin' you can't 'ear yourself speak. An' they can't 'elp hittin' of yer, neither. Same's it was at interbang an' comin' up to Longyval. No, give me in-an'-aht work, I sy every time. You do git a bit an for yer money in a plice like Devil's Wood."

The Lewis gun is a typewriter on our side which has solid documents to its credit, and the English of humour, which the Boche so sadly lacks, has no lack of serious purpose and noble self-sacrifice when the call for them comes. Our men are clean fighters, but you can read here what their sense of stern justice will do when one of their officers has been treacherously trapped. Captain Dawson gives also an admirable example of bluff, which is useful: A cool Canadian, with one capable hand only an empty revolver, was left in a trench, his only companion being a wounded orderly outside. Twenty Germans suddenly appeared. He played his revolver, made them all surrender, secured an officer's pipe, and asked for something to smoke. But he had, in reflection, to refuse the offered cigar because, with one hand in working order, he didn't dare to risk lighting it! After a long time the orderly came back with three men and a corporal, and the prisoners were hatched away.

A reverend corporal explained that he was no expert; "but it seems queer to me that those highly-trained people who run the Boche machine should show ignorance they do of everything they can't weigh in measure and touch with their fingers. . . . So far, the Boche would seem to be incapable of grasping the existence of anything that cannot be turned out of a 'handy'."

There are other great and potent things, as this book shows, and they make our men humble, modest, incredible. Captain Dawson in this veracious record makes no show of his own personality; but it is easy to see his tact and understanding. We believe he is now engaged on further work of the sort. It will be eagerly awaited. The present volume is published for the "Bystander" and has the advantage of Captain Simsfather's pictures, which are one of the outstanding contributions by a combatant to the illustration of the warfare of to-day.

THE FRENCH PRIVATE.

"Gaspard the Poilu." From the French of René Benjamin. Heinemann. 5s. net.

THE war has produced so voluminous a literature that it is impossible for the most ardent to keep pace with it. We have books at first hand, second hand, and third hand, and we have "war fiction", which is the most trying of all. While the impressions of trained observers who have had an opportunity of seeing for themselves the things about which they write have a value of their own, they have not, they cannot have, the same vital human interest as the stories of those who are actually engaged in the fight. The best literature "that the war has produced is to be found in the letters from the front, simple, direct, and inexpressibly moving, not written or intended for publication. This story of Gaspard the Poilu, translated from the French, has the quality of those letters. It reads like an autobiography, and although it is written in the form of a story, it bears upon it the unmistakable impress of fidelity and truth. What could be more alive or convincing than the description with which the book opens of the little French village aroused out of its pre-war lethargy in August 1914? We can see it all: the little squares, the roofs rosy in the sun, the heavy wagons going lazily on their way, the stupid faces of the peasants as they bring their country produce to market. And then the change to the field of battle, a little where the enemy is hidden, and we hear only the sound of the guns and the shells bursting all around. Through it all marches Gaspard, the typical French Poilu, brave, alert, inimitable with a touch of

swagger, and yet essentially capable. The writer has the gift of vivid description. "They were tramping in a sticky paste, from which they had to pull their feet at every step. When a man slipped and caught at the wall his hand, too, sank into the mud. When his rifle fell from his shoulder he snatched at it with his muddy hand and plastered it with clay. In less than five minutes the whole man—arms and clothing—was caked from head to foot, and these fifty soldiers, following each other in the rugged crevasse, seemed to be fighting against the earth that threatened to swallow them, working with elbows, feet, hands, loins, and heads, groaning, swearing, crawling and clutching—men who had become moles or earthworms in a tomb, where they struggled, mud-stained, slimy, desperate, but determined." One can almost feel the mud caked about one in the reading!

Gaspard is very French. So might, perhaps, Mr. Kipling's Tommy be described as "very English". But the styles of M. Benjamin and Mr. Kipling are worlds apart. M. Benjamin leaves nothing to the imagination. His detail is as finely drawn as that of Meissonier's pictures. Very charming is his description of a hospital for the wounded, with its nurses. "One was Kindness, the other was Charm personified, and the third was Life, life of spirit and life of heart; no one wanted to die after seeing her." And then, with a few deft touches, he gives us the story of the mother who visits her dying son. He conjures up for us her whole tragic history, and we follow her back to the desolate home in Paris that is now to be always desolate.

Pathos and humour follow close upon one another in the pages of this book, which should be read by all who wish to understand the soul of the French soldier.

LATEST BOOKS.

"The Little Towns of Flanders." Woodcuts and Descriptive Notes by Albert Delstanche, with a Prefatory Letter from Emile Verhaeren. Translated from the French by Geoffrey Whitworth. Chatto and Windus. 3s. 6d. net.

Here are a dozen woodcuts by a true artist, accompanied by simple notes that keep close to the heart of Flanders. Bruges, Ypres, Furnes, Dixmude, Nieuport, Ghent, Termonde, Louvain, are the little towns chosen by M. Delstanche, and it is always with their special significance that his mind lingers. He has caught with its poetical and original touch the mystery of a life half-spent that makes Bruges a sleepy romance of the long ago, nearer to Jean van Eyck than to those impatient parts of Belgium that received in their ambitious trades the scouts and spies and financiers who heralded the coming of the Germans. Ypres, now shattered by shot and shell, is represented here by the Place du Musée, and Furnes by the old Grand' Place. One of the best woodcuts does justice to the "Quai aux Herbes" at Ghent, with its beautiful Hall of the Watermen; and here is the "Hotel de Ville" at Louvain, designed by Mathieu Layens during the reign of Philip the Good, and enriched with such a fantasy of ornamentation that stone is made to look like sumptuous jewellery combined with lace. M. Delstanche speaks of its "mad prodigality", and connects it with the Flemish burghers of the fifteenth century, who took a feverish pride in the possession of luxurious gems and jewels.

Emile Verhaeren is certain that all the barbarian ravages of German war will be cleared away by pious hands; that Ypres, Dixmude, Visé, Dinant, Alost, Louvain, Termonde, will be raised from their ruins; but a destroyed work of art is really gone for ever. Belgium has lost the mediæval sunrise in many of her historical places; but she can produce in art sunrises of her own, cities of renewed hope inspired by genius.

"Badges and their Meanings." Philip. 1s. net.

An admirable little work in colour which is intended as a companion to "Rank at a Glance", already published by the same firm. It clearly explains the cuffs and shoulder-straps in Navy and Army which utterly baffle the vast majority of civilians. Armed with this book we can identify an Admiral of the Fleet, Admiral, Vice and Rear-Admirals, Captain, Commander, Gunner and Boatswain when we meet him in our walks abroad. We can distinguish between an Assistant Engineer in the Royal Naval Reserve and an Assistant Paymaster in the R.N.V.R. We shall not confound a Colonel of a Highland regiment with a Lieutenant-Colonel of the same. We shall know a Gordon Highlander from a Lancashire Fusilier at a glance. And when an aeroplane flies over us in broad daylight whether it is a Turk, a German, or a British, and be able to take cover or no accordingly. This little book ought to be used in boys' schools—if the anti-Militarists will allow us to say so.

INSURANCE.

NORWICH UNION QUINQUENNIAL.

UNTIL European war broke out in August 1914 the Norwich Union Life Insurance Society had remained thoroughly prosperous, and there was, at all events, a possibility of an increased bonus being paid in 1916. In expert insurance circles the expectation of an increase was undoubtedly general, and we now know that Mr. Davidson Walker, the general manager and actuary, was similarly hopeful that a new record would be made. War, however, upsets all calculations, and on the present occasion no surplus will be divided, although the recent valuation showed that the normal profit earned had been considerably the largest in the history of the business. Including the sum brought forward unappropriated from 30 June 1911, the net surplus disclosed by the calculations amounted to £612,552, but the total was £1,230,259 before provision had been made for depreciation of securities, and £188,325 was added by war claims to the normal cost of mortality. The surplus which in ordinary circumstances would have been available was therefore £1,418,584, or considerably more than twice the amount that was distributed after the 1911 investigation, while earlier valuation statements show that the surplus was £458,346 in 1906, £319,075 in 1901, £224,891 in 1896, and £184,300 in 1891; and in connection with these figures it has further to be remembered that prior to 1901 the assurances were valued by the Hm table of mortality with 3 per cent. assumed interest, whereas more recent investigations have been made by the Om table at the lower rate of 2½ per cent.

The progress made by the Norwich Union in recent years has indeed been almost phenomenal, and only war on a vast scale could have brought about the present disappointment, which may be regarded as purely temporary. It is evident from the details of the valuation that the Society prospered during the recent quinquennium, notwithstanding war claims and the enormous depreciation caused by hostilities. Adopting exactly the same actuarial tests as were applied to the contracts at the 1911 investigation, the calculations disclosed a net surplus only £15,000 short of the large amount distributed in that year, when a "compound" bonus at the rate of 36s. per cent. per annum was paid, and a very substantial sum was left over undivided. Satisfactory, if not handsome, bonuses could therefore have been declared had not Mr. Davidson Walker decided to recommend an ultra-conservative course to the directors, in view of the uncertainty in regard to the future which exists.

Three courses, as a matter of fact, were open to the management: (1) To distribute the surplus shown by this test valuation, and this would have enabled the directors to allot bonuses on the same compound principle as before, but at a slightly lower rate, say, 30s. per cent. per annum; (2) to raise the assumed rate of interest to 3 per cent., and repeat the last bonus declaration; and (3) to pass the bonus, and greatly add to the stability of the undertaking. The last of these three options was the one adopted on the advice of the actuary, and it was undoubtedly the most prudent in the circumstances. Nobody can say what may or may not happen during the next few years, and the only sensible course is to conserve all possible resources. As now actuarially equipped the society is clearly in a position to stand any conceivable strain to which it may hereafter be subjected through the war. The valuation of the assurances has been established on a true 2½ per cent. net premium basis, and the annuities and pensions have been valued by a modern, instead of by a somewhat antiquated, table of mortality as formerly. These two improvements, which were indubitably desirable whatever might be the rate of interest assumed to be earned in the future, absorbed £138,147 of the surplus, £103,847 and £34,300 respectively, leaving £383,575 available as a floating war contingency fund, since £90,830 had been divided during the quinquennium by way of interim bonus.

Whether this special reserve of nearly four hundred

thousand pounds will suffice to meet all net claims after June 30 1916, and provide for any further depreciation which may have to be faced as a result of the war, remains to be seen, but it should not be overlooked that interest rates are continuing to rise, and will before long more than make good the loss produced on the net interest earnings by the higher rate of income tax which is now payable. From an actuarial standpoint the outlook for the society is therefore distinctly promising, as the probability is that the mass of unvalued interest will hereafter prove even more liberal than in the past, even should the Government be compelled, by national necessities, to place a heavier burden on the tax-payer.

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